TRUE WEST

ALL TRUE — ALL FACT — STORIES OF THE REAL WEST

AUGUST, 1957 - 25¢

Seven Cities of Sin and Silver

Grim, Stark, Spectral — Only their Skeletons Remain to Bear Evidence of a Turbulent Past

Nell Murbarger

Ernest H Hovendan D D S
Box 457
Ft Jones Calif

Whiskey, Skunks & Rattlesnakes

By J. Frank Dobie

Buffalo Bill As I Knew Him

Some Shooting!

Wes Hardin: "I Killed Five Men Out of Six!"

The Great Diamond Hoax

Skullduggery that Shook the World Perpetrated by a Pair of "Weatherbeaten Desert Rats"

by Russell Quinn

McCausey
1957

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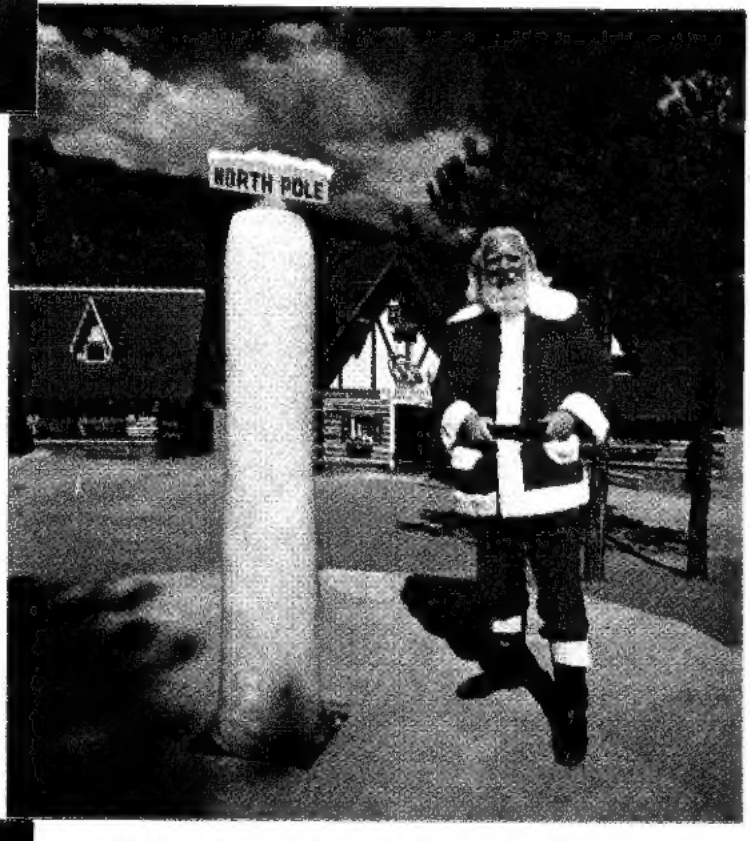
EVER THINK OF SANTA IN JULY?



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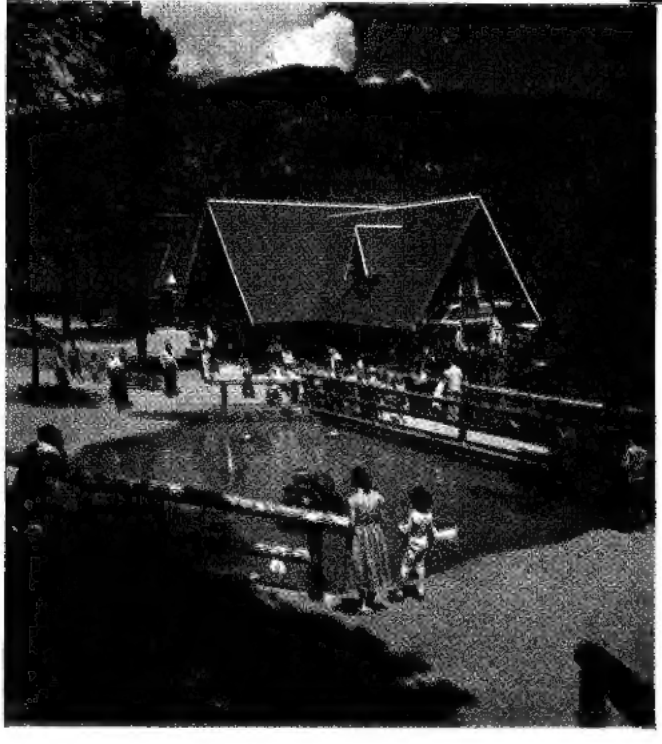

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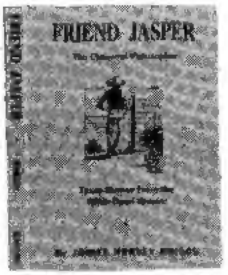

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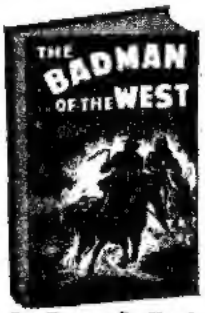

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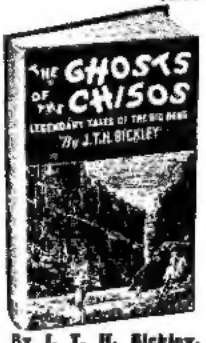

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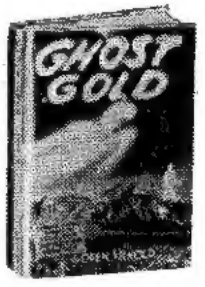

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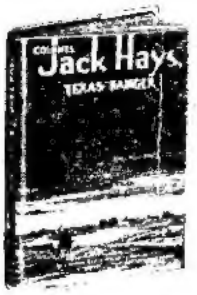

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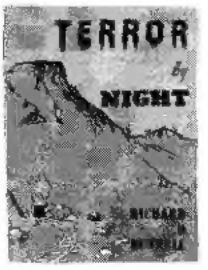

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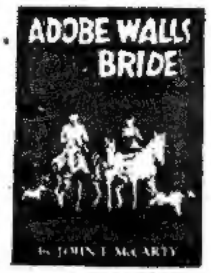

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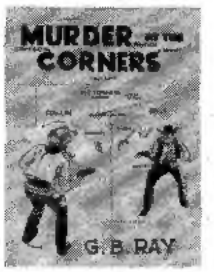

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Coming Up!

ONLY fourteen men comprised the Arizona Rangers when they were first organized in 1901; yet this small force under the command of Burton C. (Cap) Mossman "slammed the fear of God" into a whole army of the orneriest hombres who ever straddled leather.

Worst of the lot was the multiple killer, Augustine Chacon, part Mexican, part Apache, and all devil. Cap Mossman hunted him down below the Mexican border, captured him single-handed, and brought him back across the line to pay for his crimes on the gallows. Glenn Shirley tells the thrilling story of one of the West's classic manhunts in "Cap Mossman and the Apache Devil."

In the high, lonely country where Nevada bumps into Idaho, a headless skeleton guards The Lost Sheepherder Mine. Fabulously rich in ore, the mine awaits re-discovery by some lucky adventurer. Nell Murbarger spins the fascinating yarn in the next issue, illustrated with wonderful Murbarger photographs, of course.

J. Frank Dobie selects a truly different subject for the hero of his next TW article, an old-time Texas Longhorn. Old Sancho, a family pet, was driven north with a trail herd to Wyoming. But Sancho was homesick for his home ranch in the mesquite country south of San Antonio. So back he came from Wyoming, walking two thousand miles to his home and mistress. Don't miss "The Return of Old Sancho," by the Southwest's master story-teller.

IN 1954, at Fairplay, Colorado, Colonel Frank Mayer died at the age of 103. Norm Wiltsey writes the Mayer story in his article "Last of the Hide Hunters." Colonel Mayer, most scientific of all the hunters who slaughtered the great bison herds, quit the bloody hide business in 1875. His skillful hunting methods, his adventures with hostile and friendly Indians, and his pointed comments on the "longhaired buckskinners" who made a career out of posing as Wild West heroes, make interesting reading.

UNDER the cold desert moon, the she-cougar and the black bear fought a terrific duel. No human eye watched the deadly struggle between the two big predators, but next morning the "sign" of the fight was accurately interpreted by Government trapper Russ Culbreath and his Apache companion. Dev Klapp's "Battle in the Night" vividly reconstructs the scene for you.

Rarely will you find an incident in frontier history wherein lawmen of the caliber of Bill Tilghman, Neal Brown, and the Masterson brothers, Jim and Tom, joined forces in a gunscrape. But such is the case in Robert K. DeArment's graphic tale of a Kansas county seat war in 1889. In fact, it was the last such war in Kansas before ballots replaced bullets in the hot political skirmishes of the state.

"Apache Scout" is the story of Big Mouth, last living scout of the Apache wars. Big Mouth, who served in the campaigns against Victorio and Geronimo, told his story through an interpreter to Eve Ball, trusted friend and confidante of the Apaches. Complete with photographs and a striking character sketch of the old warrior himself.

If you think that danger and adventure are no longer to be found in the West, Virgil Hutton's "Terror in the Canyon" will change your ideas mighty fast. Virgil, his wife, son, and dog, drifted down Snake Canyon in the Colorado River on a rubber raft. The trip turned into a nightmare when darkness overtook them in mid-canyon with miles of roaring rapids yet to be run before they could reach a reasonably safe landing spot. Your columnist got sea-sick just reading the story!

Lee Badgett, a young cowpoke of twenty-

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July-August, 1957
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Whole No. 22

True West

All True—All Fact—Stories of the Real West

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A "SMALL" PUBLICATION

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Truly Western

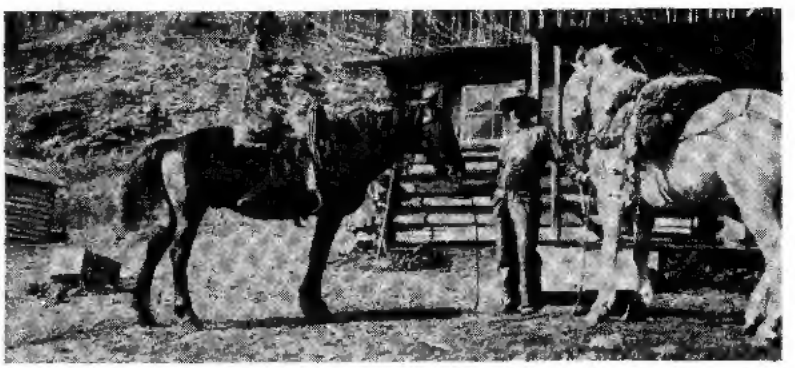
Old-timers' Corral

Howdy, TRUE WEST:

I am writing to tell you how much I enjoy reading your magazine, which has many Western stories and persons that I personally know about. For instance, Jack Flagg, who was mentioned in the recent story on Nate Champion.

It was in 1890, at the age of eleven, that I hired out to Jack Flagg as a horse wrangler for the rustler wagon down in the Powder River country. Five men were interested in this nester-or rustler-wagon. Jack Flagg was wagon boss. Lew Webb, Tom Gardner, Billy Hill, and Al Allison comprised the rest of the crew; all top cowboys who knew cattle and range conditions with the best of them.

Those five men had formed a partnership. They were not cattle thieves, just nesters. Like most nesters, they would brand a maverick or "slick" whenever one showed up. They were using the Hat brand all during the spring roundup. The nester wagon worked the range along with the cow outfits, but was not allowed to work the roundup until the cowmen were through.



Floyd C. Bard, Government hunter at a trapper's cabin in the Big Horn Mountains.

Regarding Nate Champion: As far as I ever knew, Nate was not at the head of any Red Sash gang of outlaws terrorizing the whole country, as he has often been depicted. Nate was just a nester starting up in the cattle business like all the other nesters. Last time I saw Nate alive was the spring of 1891.

I was night-hawking horses for a large survey party, and was camped on a little stream that flows in through the Hole-in-the-Wall. One of the work horses got a broken leg when kicked by another horse, and the boss rode back to the Bar C Ranch to buy a horse to replace him. While he was gone, Nate Champion and Ross Gilbertson rode into camp to visit a spell. Harry Ward, our teamster, was an old friend of Nate's.

Champion stood about five-seven or five-eight and weighed about 160 pounds. He wore a dark-brown mustache and was a very good-looking man. Now if Nate had been the outlaw he is pictured as being, his funeral and that of Nick Ray wouldn't have been one of the largest ever held in the town of Buffalo, Wyoming.

That was a bad situation all around in those days between the nesters and the cattlemen. I knew the men who were arrested, and jailed for the murder of George A. Wellman, although I didn't know Wellman personally. These men were Hank Smith, Clayton Crews, and Charley Taylor, who wore the red sash. The actual killer of Wellman was never known until a few years ago, and then it was too late to arrest him. His name was Starr, and he was shot to death by a lawman in Montana.

I also knew Johnson Long (as Jack Long) in 1910. I last heard of Hank Smith living at Red Deer, Alberta, Canada.

Perhaps you would like to know more about how the nesters operated. Well, a bunch of them would come to the Hat wagon, work a few days gathering up their cattle, and then they'd be gone and more nesters would come. After the spring roundup, the nester wagon pulled into the Flagg Ranch on the Red Fork of Powder River. Jack Flagg, Dutchy, the cook, and I stayed at the ranch. The others went elsewhere to work. Also staying at the ranch was Johnny Tisdale, his wife, and two small children.

During the time I was at the ranch, Johnny and his wife Kate were like father and mother to me; I'll never forget how kind they were to a young button like me.

In my long lifetime I have put in twenty summers in the Big Horn Mountains of northern Wyoming as a dude-wrangler, packer, and guide on pack trips. I also spent fourteen years as a Government hunter and trapper. During this period I killed twenty-eight bears that were raiding sheep camps.

I am no writer, but I love to spin these yarns I lived through.—Floyd C. Bard, Box 73, Big Horn, Wyoming.

Billy the Kid Rides Again!

Dear Mr. Wiltsey:

Well, I see you folks at *True West* are not only good magazine editors but bang-up good journalists as well. I got a big kick out of your clever "target piece," "Killer Kid," in the April issue. Reading that yarn, with your deliberately provocative preface, brought back memories of my own days in the newspaper game thirty years ago. Whenever there was no news, we'd print a red-hot target piece on a politician or some other controversial figure—then sit back and wait for the letters to pour in and the circulation go up. Just as you fellows are now doing. I'll bet by this time your office is swamped with letters from historians of Western Americana, rabid Billy the

(Continued on page 43)

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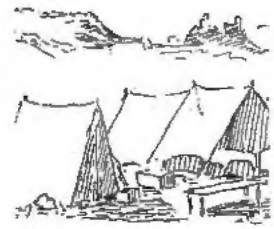
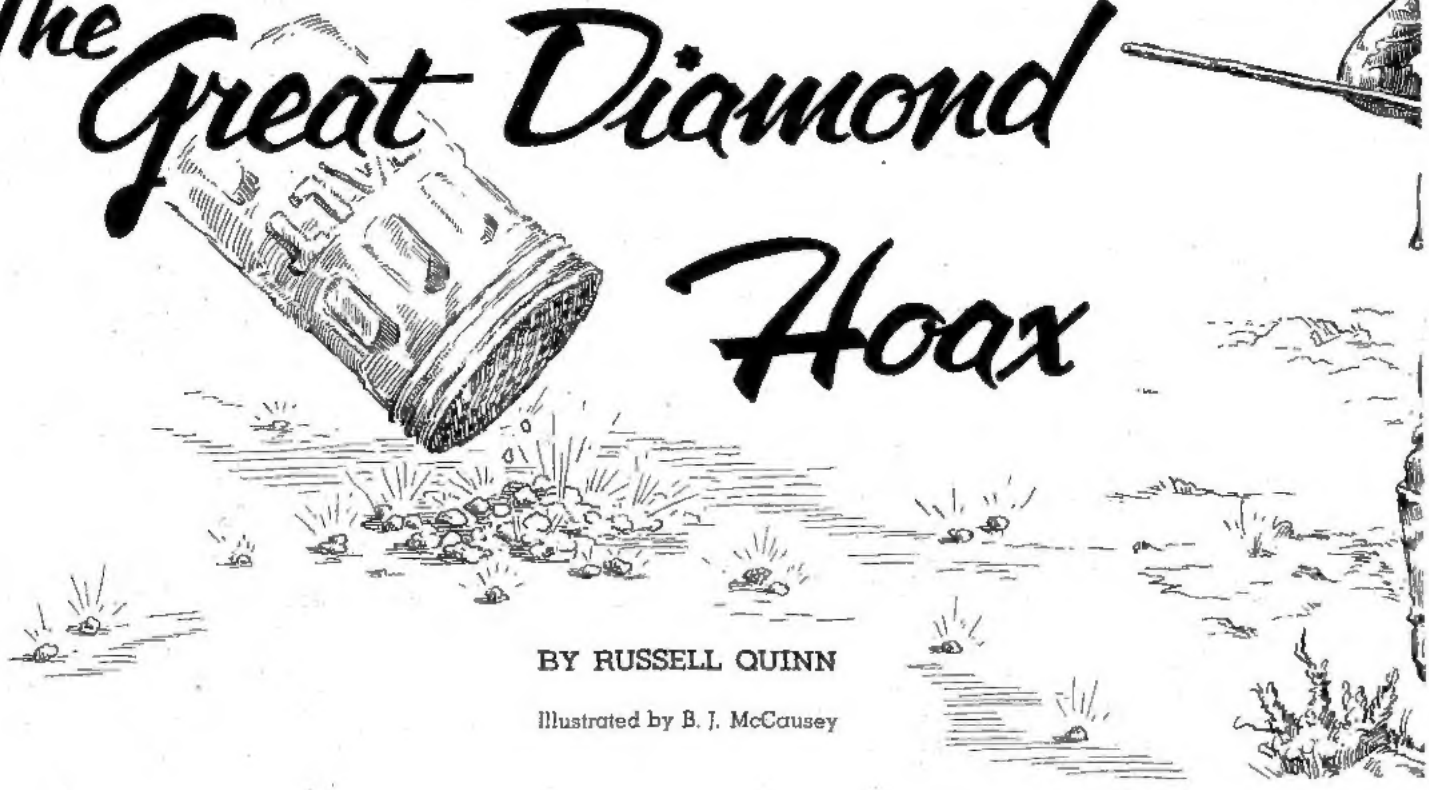
They looked like simpletons, the two weather-beaten prospectors who wandered into the Bank of California with a buckskin sack of diamonds. It was just the first act in



The Great Diamond Hoax



BY RUSSELL QUINN

Illustrated by B. J. McCausey

ONE day in the summer of 1871, two ragged desert rats wandered open-mouthed into the ornate marble foyer of the Bank of California with a buckskin sack which they asked to be placed in safe keeping. That little act touched off the most amazing series of chain reactions ever to be let loose in the explosive old West. Its repercussions panicked the financial world from San Francisco to New York, and from London to Johannesburg. It threatened the economic stability of two European countries and a Crown colony. And only by sheer luck it missed plunging the United States into a financial tailspin.

The two apparently simple-minded prospectors outwitted the best financial brains in the world—from Baron Rothschild in London to William Ralston, dynamic head of the Bank of California in San Francisco. They threatened with ruin the great diamond industry of South Africa and the extensive gem processing industry of the Low Countries of Europe.

And about all they did was to bring a package of diamonds to the Bank of California to be put in the vault for safekeeping. After that they mostly kept silent. The play was picked up by the smart money and taken from there. It worked out in its own incredible way with only slight coaching from the sidelines. Their silence was brilliant.

AT that time San Francisco was riding high on a second mining boom. As the rush of '49 petered out and the city was sliding into a depression hang-over, the richest hill in the world was suddenly uncovered at Virginia City, Nevada. Bullion once more was mule-trained down from the hills to pour robust energy into the flagging commercial life of the City. It was bursting with optimism. The West could turn up one surprise after another. Its mineral wealth had probably scarcely been touched. Who could tell where the next bonanza would turn up?

Into the vortex of this optimism, the two prospectors walked with their bundle of diamonds. Then they left.

A curious employee took a peek at the package in the vault and soon news of its contents reached the ears of William Ralston, dynamic head of the Bank. Before nightfall he had the two men cornered in his office. They appeared a little bewildered at the excitement their deposit was causing and uncertain as to how to go ahead with their find. Or so Ralston thought. He proceeded to enlighten them.

The men were reluctant to give the banker any information except that they had found the diamonds "out yonder," and that there were more where they came from. But they finally agreed to let Ralston have a lapidary appraise the gems.

Ralston also had the men appraised. They were bona fide prospectors all right. One of the men, Philip Arnold, had in fact at one time done a prospecting job for one of Ralston's partners. The other, John Slack, had a good reputation among the mining men around town.

When the lapidary reported an estimated value of $125,000 on the small parcel of gems on hand, Ralston was ready to move. Billy Ralston, the West's leading financier of his day, is known in California history as "the man who built San Francisco." He was a product of the Old West. His sound banking instincts were disturbed only by a romantic love for San Francisco. He would plunge into any project that contributed to the greater glory of his city. At one instance he singlehandedly saved the West Coast, and possibly the country, from financial panic. And in the manner of the Old West.

Because of one of those flukes of "fine print" that occasionally occur when a restless Congress passes laws with more attention to the coming vacation or next election than the work at hand, the country's banks found themselves unable to exchange bullion for coin with the U.S. Treasury. When this situation was discovered, every bank in the West,

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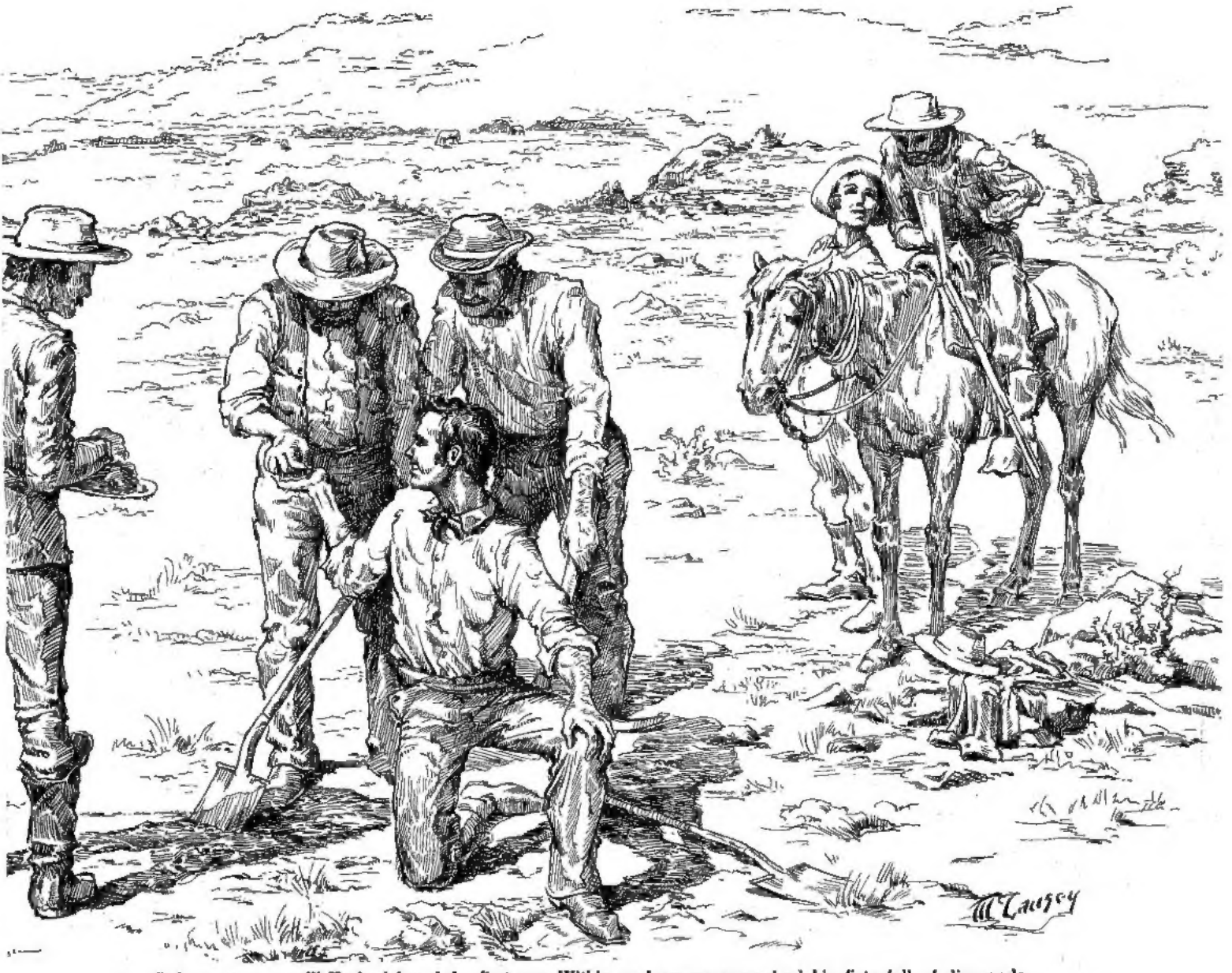

Rubery gave a yell! He had found the first one. Within an hour everyone had his fists full of diamonds.

where they were accepting millions of dollars in bullion weekly from the mines, faced ruin.

BILLY RALSTON, a man of action, knew that he could not wait for Congress to remedy this situation. In the dead of night he broke into the sub-treasury building in San Francisco and lugged a million dollars worth of bullion over from the Bank of California. Then he lugged back a million dollars of "stolen" coin from the sub-treasury.

At nine o'clock the next morning the sleepless head of the Bank of California watched the lines of people forming outside the institution. Getting his tellers together, he opened the Bank an hour earlier and began paying off. Then he went around to all of the other banks in San Francisco. Mounting a soap-box he told the nervous crowds to bring their bank books over to the Bank of California. It would recognize their accounts.

The run was stopped. Congress straightened out the law and the Treasury Department turned a deaf-ear on a report of "house-breaking" from its branch in San Francisco.

This was Billy Ralston—the man who built San Francisco. A man who, every day promptly at five o'clock would leap from his desk, jump into his waiting carriage and with reins in hand race the five o'clock train twenty miles down the peninsula to his home.

This is the man who looked at $125,000 worth of gems in an old buckskin sack and visioned a great diamond industry for San Francisco. But the reluctant Simple Simons didn't allow as to whether they wanted big money to come in on their diggings or not. Finally, Ralston pried them away from a small interest for $100,000.

Then he became the banker again. He would, of course, have to see the fields before he turned over the $100,000. That seemed fair enough to Arnold and Slack. They agreed to take a small party consisting of anybody he chose out to see the diamonds. They could satisfy themselves as to the extent of the fields. But they added one proviso. At a certain point before coming to the discovery the party would have to submit to being blindfolded. And on the return journey, likewise.

These conditions were accepted. In the party was David D. Colton, general manager of the Central Pacific Railroad. The group entrained for Rawlings Springs, Wyoming. There, taking to horse they set off across some wild, inhospitable country. After a week's travel, with Arnold continually taking off to scale various mountain peaks to get his bearings, the party was blindfolded and finally allowed to enter the diamond fields.

The eye-rubbing that followed was not due to the tightness of the blindfold. Not only did they uncover diamonds, but rubies and sapphires as well. The party returned to San Francisco in high spirits.

Ralston now went into high gear. He sent a $1,100 cable to his old partner, Asbury Harpending, in London. He told of the discovery of a vast diamond field on the West Coast and insisted that Harpending come to San Francisco to manage the venture. Harpending thought his old friend was out of his mind. Besides that, Harpending was in the middle of a titanic financial struggle with one of London's leading financiers, Baron Grant.

JUST as he was slugging his way into a position of leadership in London's financial mart, this cable from Ralston arrived. He replied that under no circumstances could he leave London at the time. Cable after cable came from Ralston. Finally Harpending began to give the matter consideration. Ralston was dealing in certainties. He had samples of the gems. The fields had been examined. It was a project that dazzled the imagination.

Then Baron Rothschild called on him.

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Arnold and Slack wandered open-mouthed into the ornate marble foyer of the Bank.

He had heard that a great diamond field had been discovered in western America. Did Harpending know anything about it? Harpending showed him Ralston's cables, but also expressed his doubts. Rothschild said: "Don't be too sure. America has produced some wonderful surprises. She may have some yet in store. If you find out anything further let me know. The House of Rothschild is interested."

That tied it. Harpending decided that he had his quarry pretty well cornered in London. He would go to San Francisco for three months, settle the diamond business one way or another, and then come back to pick up where he left off in London.

When he got to San Francisco, he immediately checked all of Ralston's notes. The story seemed straight enough. Throughout Ralston's lengthy questioning the men had never contradicted themselves. Moreover, at their own suggestion, they had gone back to the diamond fields to pick up "a couple of million" dollars worth of diamonds as security for the $100,000 promised for the part interest. Ralston had asked for more security before turning over the money. The men were on their way to the fields when Harpending arrived.

A few days later a wire came from the prospectors. It asked for someone to meet them at Lathrope, a railway junction point, to help share the responsibility of the burden. Harpending decided to go himself. He boarded their train at Lathrope and had no trouble in locating the men. They were both mud-stained and tired. Slack was sound asleep. But Arnold was grimly awake with a buckskin package at his feet and rifle at his side.

The men told him a lurid but not improbable story. They had collected what they thought to be about two million in stones and then put them in two packages — one for each. On their way back they had to cross a swollen river. They constructed a raft, but it had upset in the rushing torrent and one bundle had been lost. However, there must be a million dollars worth of gems in the bundle they had salvaged. Harpending was satisfied that that would be enough.

ARNOLD AND SLACK left Harpending at Oakland. He took the heavy sack on the ferry for San Francisco. An excited group was waiting at his home. Without ceremony he emptied the sack on a bed-sheet. The gathering gave an astonished gasp. Diamonds, rubies, sapphires tumbled out on the spread.

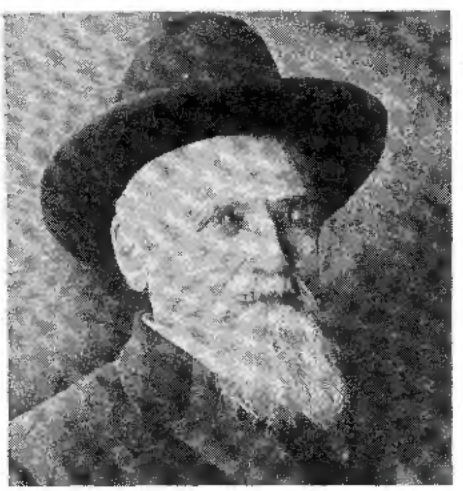
The next day they were openly displayed in the bank window and fortune-hunters struck for the hills. Somehow, possibly by design, the word got around that the fields were in Arizona. So most of the diamond-seekers went thataway instead of thisaway.

Ralston now moved to set up an organization. First Arnold and Slack were called in and convinced that they had hold of something that was too big for them. It would take millions to develop the fields. Arnold was the spokesman throughout the negotiations. Slack would sit back with pipe in mouth and merely grunt assent to whatever Arnold agreed. And Arnold spoke very little. Finally the men were willing to part with two-thirds interest for $600,000. Papers were drawn up to that effect.

But before consumating the deal the banker made two more cautious provisions. Samples of the gems would be taken to Tiffany's in New York. If their appraisal agreed with the San Francisco appraisal then a mining expert would be chosen to look over the fields. The prospectors agreed. Ralston could pick his own mining expert and they would personally conduct him to the fields.

Harpending took personal charge of the samples that were being taken to New York. With him were General Dodge; William Lent, another of Ralston's partners; Alfred Rubery, a London associate of Harpending's; and the miners, Arnold and Slack. In New York, Harpending retained Samuel Barlow, a

Left: Asbury Harpending, financier who came over from London to investigate the diamond deal. Center: William C. Ralston, financial wizard who built San Francisco and thought he was going to reorganize the world's diamond industry. Right: Baron Rothschild, head of the great financial empire, who was also taken in by the two simple prospectors.



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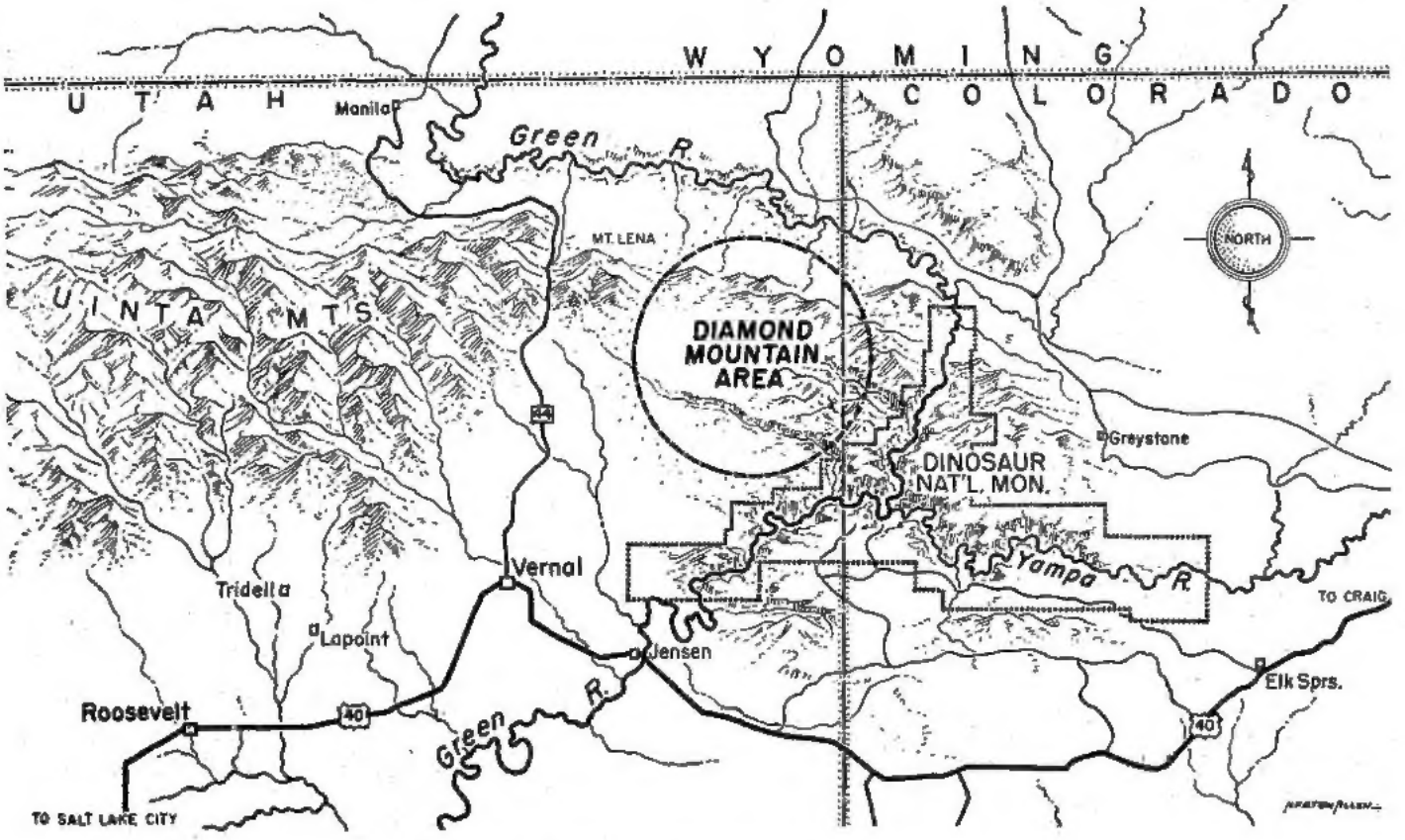


Map showing the diamond mountain area.

leader of the New York bar, and General B. F. Butler as legal advisers. General Butler was then a member of Congress. He was taken on to handle the Washington end.

General Butler arranged to have Mr. Tiffany see the jewels in his home. A distinguished group was invited to witness the momentous event. It included General George B. McClellan, Horace Greeley, and other leading figures of the era.

The men stood around the billiard table as Harpending dumped the gems on the green cloth. All eyes were on Mr. Tiffany. He rolled them around, sorted in little piles, and then held them to the light. Finally he said: "Gentlemen, these are beyond question precious stones of enormous value. But before I give you my exact appraisement I must submit them to my lapidary. I will report to you further in two days."

Arnold and Slack ambled out into the night. The evening-frocked men of affairs remained to click billiard balls and discuss the consequence of a vast diamond field on the North American continent.

IN two days Tiffany sent in his report. The gems submitted were valued at $150,000. That placed the value of gems on hand at $1,500,000. News of the appraisement leaked out and the speculative market began to stir. The hardier plungers stormed Harpending's door to get in on the ground floor. But the financier wasn't opening up.

There was still the last clincher to be taken care of. An examination of the fields by an expert. The importance of the project demanded the services of the leading expert in the field. That man was Henry Janin—an expert head and shoulders above any of his contemporaries. It was common knowledge that no one ever lost money on one of Janin's recommendations. He was ultra-conservative. His recommendation on mining prospects pegged the value of the property in every mart in the world.

Janin agreed to examine the field for $2,500, all expenses paid and the right to take up 1000 shares of stock at a nominal price.

As the party was making preparations for the trip Arnold began to get restive. He took his complaint to Harpending. He disliked all the publicity. He pointed out that he was placing his property at the mercy of others without proper security. It would be impossible to keep the location a secret after this large party had explored the fields. He had faithfully kept all his agreements but all he had to show for it was a piece of paper. The amount of wealth he was about to disclose was all out of proportion to the meager sum he was asking. Mining being the tricky business it was he wanted some cold cash before going any further.

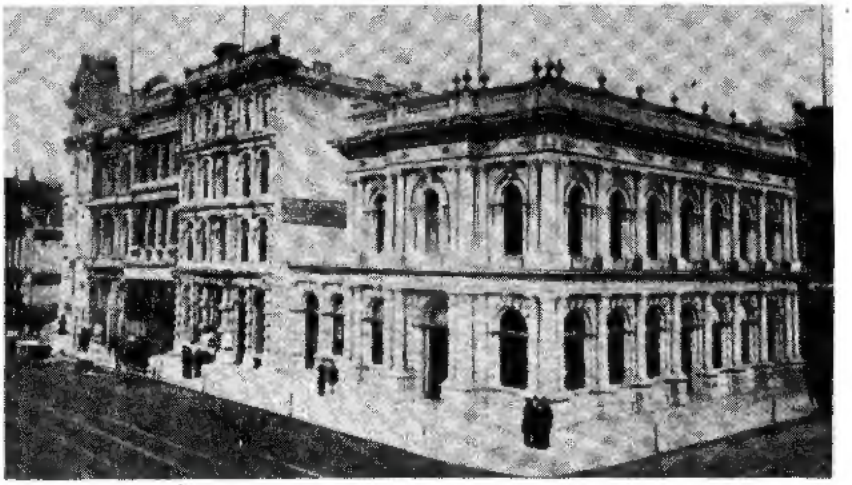
He wanted $200,000 in cash and the rest of the $600,000 put in escrow pending the Janin report. This seemed reasonable to Harpending. After all, they had much more than this amount in diamonds on hand. He telegraphed Ralston in San Francisco and the banker immediately wired back the money.

That taken care of, the party set out in high spirits for the mysterious diamond fields. It consisted of Henry Janin, General George S. Dodge, Alfred Rubery, Harpending, Arnold, and Slack.

There was also high spirits in San Francisco. The Tiffany report had touched off a holiday mood in the group out there. They wanted to be on hand to give a champagne welcome to the greatest discovery on earth. Clamoring aboard an east-bound train they wired Harpending that they would join his group at Omaha.

(Continued on page 30)

The old Bank of California building into which the two old prospectors stumbled with a sack of diamonds that set off a fantastic chain of events.



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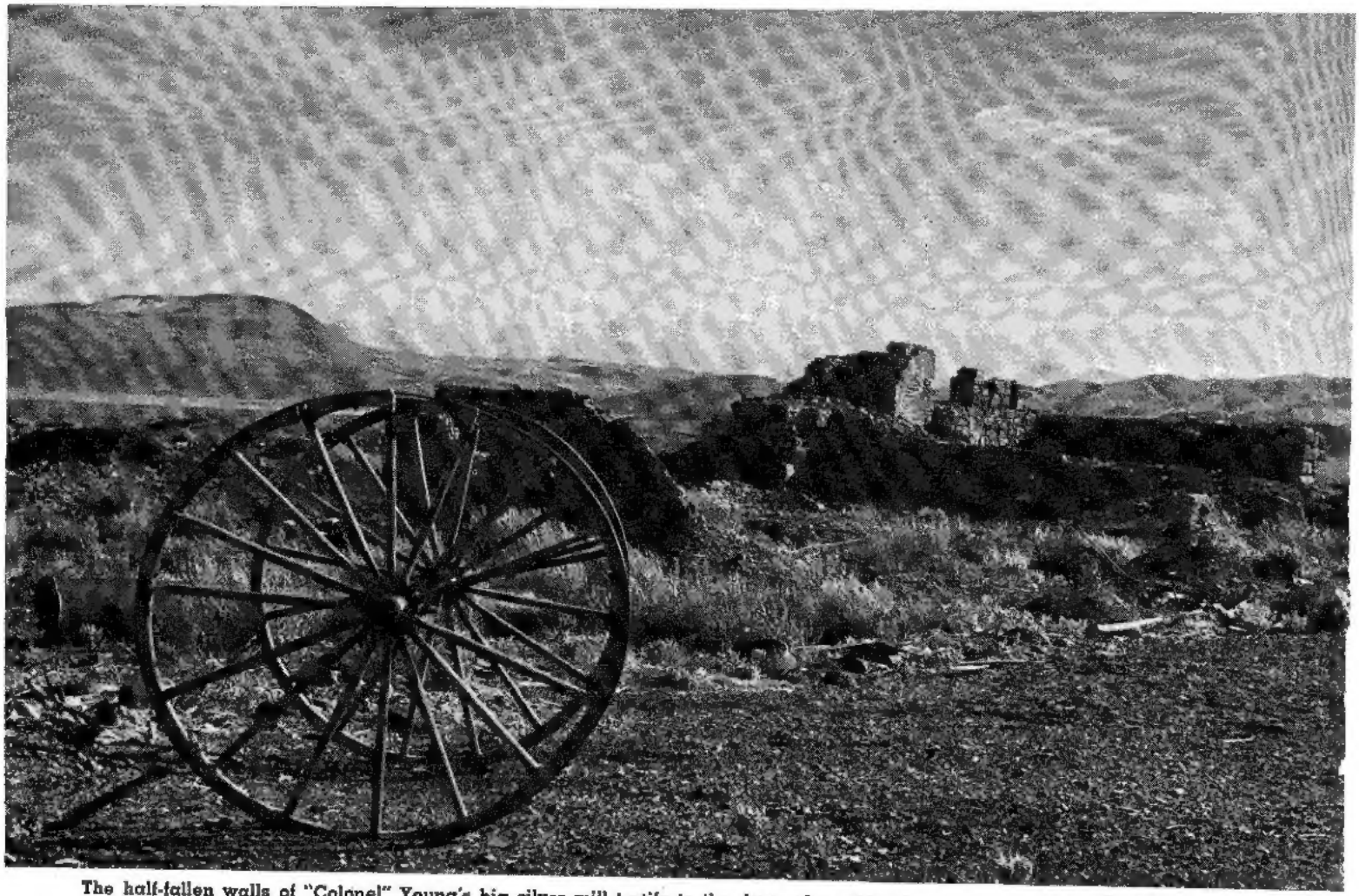

The half-fallen walls of "Colonel" Young's big silver mill testify to the days when Columbus was an important milling center for ore mined at Candelaria, just over the ridge to the north.

Of churches there were none; of law there was little, in the

SEVEN CITIES of SIN AND SILVER

BY NELL MURBARGER

Photos by the Author

From Ghosts of the Glory Trail

BETWEEN the Excelsior Range and the cold, bald pates of the Monte Cristos, lies a harsh world of sullen salt flats and grim mountains, warped in the fiery crucible of Earth's creation.

No sparkling streams soften this somnolent waste; no tree-shaded lakes lie cupped in its valleys. It is a hard land that asks no quarter and grants none; yet, even here, are the hallmarks of the prospector — the monuments that mark his mines, the cairns that monument his graves. He came and saw, and, briefly, he conquered. He gathered the harvest of the hills and passed on to other hills, other harvests, other worlds.

As proof of that passing he left behind him a gallery of seven ghosts. Seven spectral cities in a radius of a dozen miles—Candelaria, Metallic City, Belleville, Marietta, Rhodes, and Sodaville, all in Mineral County; and Columbus, barely across the line in Esmeralda.

What changes a few years can effect in the evolution of a mining district!

In 1863 there probably were not a dozen white men in all that land between the Monte Cristos and the Excelsiors.

Another ten years found seven flourishing centers of sin and silver risen from the sage.

Again, time marched on . . . and with 1955, the combined population of all those seven cities—all their nationalities and colors and creeds and ages—once again did not exceed one dozen persons!

And so the cycle is completed! Sage to cities . . . and back to sage.

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EVEN before Nevada attained her statehood, silver values had been discovered in this locality by Mexican prospectors. Many claims had been staked, and a mining district organized.

With ore from those first surface workings so rich it could be milled in the crude Mexican *arrastras*—which, ordinarily, will not recover silver values—a boom was not slow in developing. The town of Candelaria was founded in 1865, and through her twisting streets soon surged a cross-section of the United Nations, with foreign-born citizens outnumbering Americans by four to one.

With a potential bonanza under every bush, and liquor flowing with the freedom of the surf, the only scarcities in this raw new town were water, stovewood, law, and churches.

Of churches there were none; of law there was little. Wood—largely sagebrush—was cut in the hills by Indians and brought long distances on burro back; and for the first seventeen years of its history, all water used in the camp was necessarily hauled in wagons from a spring, nine miles distant, at a consumer cost of one dollar a gallon.

Over in the rival city of Bodie, a newspaper expressed surprise that a lack of water should concern Candelaria; it being charged that not more than a dozen citizens of the Nevada camp ever used the stuff—either for personal ablutions, or as a beverage. Bodie further asserted—and with an embarrassing degree of truth!—that when the telegraph line was extended to Candelaria, the operator found it necessary to descend to the 1700-foot-level of the Mount Diablo mine to locate a spot moist enough to attach his ground wire!

Throughout the 1870's and well into the '80's, Candelaria was a tough place where violence rode the night with appalling frequency. Coroner's juries were notoriously lenient, and all but the most flagrant murderers won verdicts of "self-defense."

One of the camp's more notable bloodlettings was the slaying of Tom Logan, a prominent local saloonkeeper, later eulogized by the editor of the Candelaria *True Fissure* as a quiet, peaceful gentleman, "with a disposition gentle as a woman's." Logan's death followed a "friendly" card game with Bart Greeley, another prominent citizen "of gentle disposition." Greeley lost, a quarrel ensued, and hot words were supported by hotter lead.

As a mark of respect to two "gentle" citizens, who had behaved in anything but gentle fashion, all flags of the town were flown at half-mast and all stores and saloons closed for the funeral.

CANDELARIA, by 1880, was the largest town in what then was Esmeralda County. Flanking her streets were ten saloons, two hotels, half a dozen stores, and offices occupied by three lawyers and a trio of doctors. By 1882, one of the camp's four shortages had been partially alleviated by the piping of water from Trail canyon in the White mountains. As the cost of that commodity plunged from a dollar a gallon to five cents, a Candelaria barber began advertising:

BATHS AT REASONABLE RATES!
Hot Water, $1.25; Cold Water, 75c.

One week after completion of the water line, the Carson & Colorado Railroad inaugurated service on its narrow-gauge spur track from Belleville to Candelaria. Arrival in camp of the first train was cause for great jubilation. Not only did the line mean a drastic cut in freight rates, but it also gave the town a feeling of importance and oneness with the outside world.

Douglas Robinson, a resident of Candelaria in the 1890's, and later chief probation officer of Inyo County, California, often recalls his boyhood in the old Nevada camp, most particularly his thrill at seeing great bars of silver bullion loaded into McNaughton's dray to be hauled across town to the railroad station—solid silver, and every pound the rig could haul!

"Candelaria was a great camp!" said Doug. "Rich and rambunctious . . . but it wasn't a good place to live! No, it wasn't.

"It wasn't a healthy place. There were no sewers, and few screens on doors or windows. The flies were terrific. The stamp mill was a dry crusher, with no water in the battery box. The result was an endless cloud of dust and bad lungs for the millhands, who put in twelve hours a day. The miners worked a ten-hour day, for which they received three dollars and fifty cents—far from enough to provide anything like a decent living. Most of them worked seven days a week. Very few could afford to take Sundays off. Stores were open from seven o'clock in the morning until ten at night. There were no churches. The big social event of the year was the Miner's Union dance. Occasionally there were other dances, but not many. About once in three years a traveling show would come to town—generally an Indian medicine outfit.

"Nearly every hour of the day and night found heavy freight wagons rumbling through the streets—all fetlock deep in dust. Ore from the Holmes mine was hauled to the mill by sixteen-animal outfits, while the Mount Diablo freighted to the railroad at Candelaria and shipped to Sodaville for milling. Marsh borax was being mined at Columbus, and long-line teams brought mountainous loads of the stuff to Candelaria for shipping.

"Once a sixteen-animal team ran away when one of the brake rods snapped and

At the edge of the sombre white flat which yielded the first borax to be refined commercially in the United States, lies the tattered old graveyard that served the one-time town of Columbus, Nevada. Many of those buried here were victims of violence.

turned the two wagons loose. The outfit careened all the way down main street and finally wrecked itself near our home. The driver and several of the animals were killed.

"Hay, grain, and meat had to be hauled from Fish Lake valley, and poultry and fruit from as far distant as Owens valley, in California. No one could raise a garden—there wasn't enough water. Even after water was brought from Trail canyon, 'the Company' seemed to need most of it for their own operations. The big, terraced lawn at Company headquarters caused lots of comment—most of it bitter. Mother had a little patch of grass, about as large as a front porch, and a few hollyhocks. I don't know how she got away with it, as that and the Company lawn were the only grass patches in town. I doubt if water was piped into a dozen homes.

"No," said Doug, "Candelaria wasn't a good place to live . . . but she was a great camp!"

MOST remarkable mine in the history of the district was the Northern Belle. The Belle brought no shekels to her discoverer. First staked in 1865, the great potentialities of the property were not fully recognized and the claim was permitted to lapse for want of assessment work. Restaked, in 1870, the Belle quickly distinguished herself as one of the great treasure vaults of the state. In fifteen years the mine produced close to $15,000,000 in ore, and by the close of 1880 had paid forty-seven dividends without levying a single assessment!

After producing close to $30,000,000—some sources place the figure as high as $55,000,000—the old town did a swansong in the closing years of the Nineteenth century. Of the several factors contributing to her end, one of the more important was the matter of wages.

With the price of silver declining steadily, mine operators had issued an ultimatum that wages must be reduced to three dollars daily or the mines would be forced to close. Miners refused to accept the cut. In the resulting deadlock the camp folded; inhabitants moved elsewhere, the last train pulled out of the station, and desert brush returned to grow in the streets.

And now, many years have passed since Candelaria has had even one permanent resident. In May, 1955, her twisting main street was edged by a few sturdy stone walls—the leading bank, a restaurant, a hardware store with tall, iron shutters. A litter of broken crucibles and bone-ash cupels marks the site of the assay office; but of the Roaring Gimlet saloon or its nine lusty rivals, nothing remained. Neither is there any way to determine which of those crumbled ruins had housed the town's two newspaper plants—the *Chloride Belt*, and John Dormer's *True Fissure*.

On the flat below the terraced "Company" garden stands the sagging frame of an old stagecoach; and at several points over the townsite lie great steel vaults that gape open to the desert wind. But for packrat litter and layers of powdery red dust, their interiors are empty.

MOST important of Candelaria's sister towns was Columbus, five miles over the ridge on the edge of a sombre, white flat.

On that sombre flat, at the foot of the sombre hills, America's borax industry was born.

Development of Columbus was contemporaneous with that of Candelaria. In the old, dry lake bed lay an abundant supply of salt, large quantities of which were required in the chlorination milling of silver ore. Salt claims were staked on the marsh, and, by 1865, the town of Columbus had been founded. When the slope to the north was found to provide a meager flow of water, a quartz mill was erected by "Colonel" Young. Milling equipment was freighted to the site from Aurora, and trains of pack mules began the grueling task of transporting ore from Candelaria's mines across the rugged desert mountains to the mill. With a milling charge of sixty dollars per ton, plus an additional eight dollars for transportation by pack train, only extremely rich ore could be handled in this manner . . . but Candelaria had it!

Even as he staked his salt mine, the original claimant of Columbus marsh had noted another substance with silky white fibers and a peculiar taste. No one had bothered to learn the identity of this mineral, strangely enough, until 1871 when there strayed into Columbus a former Comstock miner, William Troup.

Taking one look at the strange, silky stuff, Troup borrowed a wash boiler, highgraded a bucket of water, and kindled a sagebrush fire. With this simple equipment he quickly refined enough of the material to prove it was virtually pure borax; technically, ulexite.

Whatever degree of importance Columbus previously had enjoyed as a salt-mining and silver-mining center was instantly eclipsed by this new discovery. William T. Coleman, for whom the borate, colemanite, later would be named, installed refining equipment and by 1872 the town was deeply entrenched in the borax business.

These operations appear to have marked the first commercial refining of cottonball borax in the United States.

In the years immediately following, Columbus became the headquarters of four men who subsequently would loom large in the borax industry of the world—Coleman, Chris Zabriskie, John Ryan, and Francis Marion ("Borax") Smith.

The name of Borax Smith, in particular, was slated to go down in Western history. Acquiring the Coleman holdings, Smith established at Columbus the Pacific Coast Borax Company, imported one thousand Chinese coolies to gather and refine the borax, originated the now-famous "Twenty Mule Team" trademark, and ultimately built and operated the Tonopah and Tidewater Railroad.

"Colonel" Young's stamps, meanwhile, had continued to pound away at Candelaria's silver ore. That ore, however, no longer was transported down the mountain by straining pack mules but was freighted hence in ponderous wagons driven by Chinese teamsters.

WITH their long black queues and "furrin" ways and garb, these Chinese provided the most colorful phase of life in Columbus. For the most part they lived in small adobe huts and passed their leisure moments in dark opium cellars where they communed with the poppy and wooed the dreams of their ancestors. In addition to those employed in freighting ore and in mining and refining of the borax, many others were engaged in hauling borax—first to the railroad at Wadsworth, some hundred

Shown below are thousands of tons of milling equipment that still remain at the site of Candelaria; also, a homemade, zinc-lined bathtub, a relic of the days when baths were a luxury costing $1 a gallon.

Top left: Mountainous hea[illegible] constitute the Columbus "marsh" -birthplace of the borax industry in the U. S. Top right: Sagging remains of the old board flume which carried water from the White Mountains across miles [illegible] desert to the mining camp of Candelaria. Bottom left: A forlorn heap of [illegible]

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and fifty miles to the north, and, later, to Candelaria.

Returning to Columbus with empty wagons, the weary teams would toil up the long, hard hill between Candelaria and their home port. At last topping the summit, their Chinese drivers literally would catapult themselves down the last steep grade into Columbus.

With the horses snorting and frothing and galloping at full speed to keep ahead of the bouncing wagons—and with women, children and dogs scattering in every direction—the outfits would careen through main street, hell-bent for Lexington, each driver clinging to his seat like a cocklebur in a cow's tail, screaming and shrieking at the top of his lungs, and cursing in all the assorted tongues of China.

It may have been this unique practice—or perhaps it was the thousand-man riot in Chinatown over "China Mary"—that prompted a boastful remark by the editor of the *Borax Miner*. The Comstock, he asserted, could no longer claim any form of disorder that Columbus had not experienced.

The town even had its Grade-A lynching—a breach of the peace that grew out of a New Year's Eve dance in 1873.

Among those comprising the orchestra was a Chilean woman guitarist. Possibly she hit a sour note, now and then; or, maybe she smiled at the wrong man. Something, at least, proved displeasing to one Victor Monega who eventually reached the limit of endurance. Snatching her guitar, he threw it on the floor, smashed it to splinters, and strode from the hall. Feeling such a display of temper to be slightly ungentlemanly, one of the town's respected cafemen had followed the music critic out of doors to remonstrate with him.

Our prominent citizen, for his solicitude, ended the old year with a thin knife blade parked between his ribs.

Arrested on a murder charge, Monega was lodged in the Columbus jail; but with all the town's manpower assembled at the dance and considerable "likkered up," it goes without saying that he did not long remain behind the bars.

As Columbus possessed no tree tall enough or sturdy enough for the business at hand, Monega was escorted forcibly to the slaughter house west of town and there was strung up on a butcher's windlass, ordinarily used for hoisting beeves.

Several days later, when a deputy sheriff arrived from San Bernardino with a warrant for Monega's arrest on a California murder charge, his quarry already was answering to a Higher Court.

GREATEST prosperity in the history of Columbus fell in the years between 1870-75. In addition to the usual accoutrements of a mining camp, the old town on the dry lake then was the site of an iron foundry, a wagon works, and several machine shops. The dining room of Holland's Hotel did double duty as a public hall and theatre; and during part of its career, the town boasted two newspapers—the *Borax Miner*, and the *Columbus Times*.

As a silver-milling center, Columbus might have flourished for another decade had it not been for a disagreement between "Colonel" Young and his partner, A. J. Holmes. From a petty beginning the bad feeling mounted and eventually grew into litigation by which Holmes was forced out of the company. It was a bitter pill for him to swallow, and in taking leave of the town he vindictively warned that another year would see grass growing in the streets of Columbus.

Young only laughed at the prediction and put it down as the empty threat of a bad loser.

But the threat was not empty.

Having taken immediate steps to gain control of Candelaria's largest mine—the Northern Belle—Holmes issued an ultimatum that no more ore should be sent to Young's mill. The Belle, instead, built its own twenty-stamp quartz mill at a point seven miles west of Candelaria; and at that point in 1873, there came into being the town of Belleville—another of today's Somnolent Seven.

Had it been any way possible for grass to endure in the mineral-impregnated streets of Columbus, "Colonel" Young would have seen his ex-partner's threat come true. With the Northern Belle's patronage diverted to the new town, the ore wagons stopped rumbling down the grade from Candelaria, the stamps stopped falling, and Columbus' day as a milling center was ended.

Mining of borax continued to support the camp for another two years, but even this source of income was cut short when a richer deposit was discovered in Fish Lake Valley in 1875. With removal of the Pacific Coast Borax Company's operations to the new field, poor old Columbus flickered out like a candle in the wind.

In the last feeble bid for attention, the camp gained considerable newspaper space from the alleged discovery there of a fabulous mine which produced nothing less than pure castile soap! According to the widely publicized report, the "soap vein" was twelve feet in thickness and of unknown length; and as a means of exploiting the deposit to best advantage, it was proposed to build on the edge of the lakebed a huge plant for the manufacturing of soap and cosmetics.

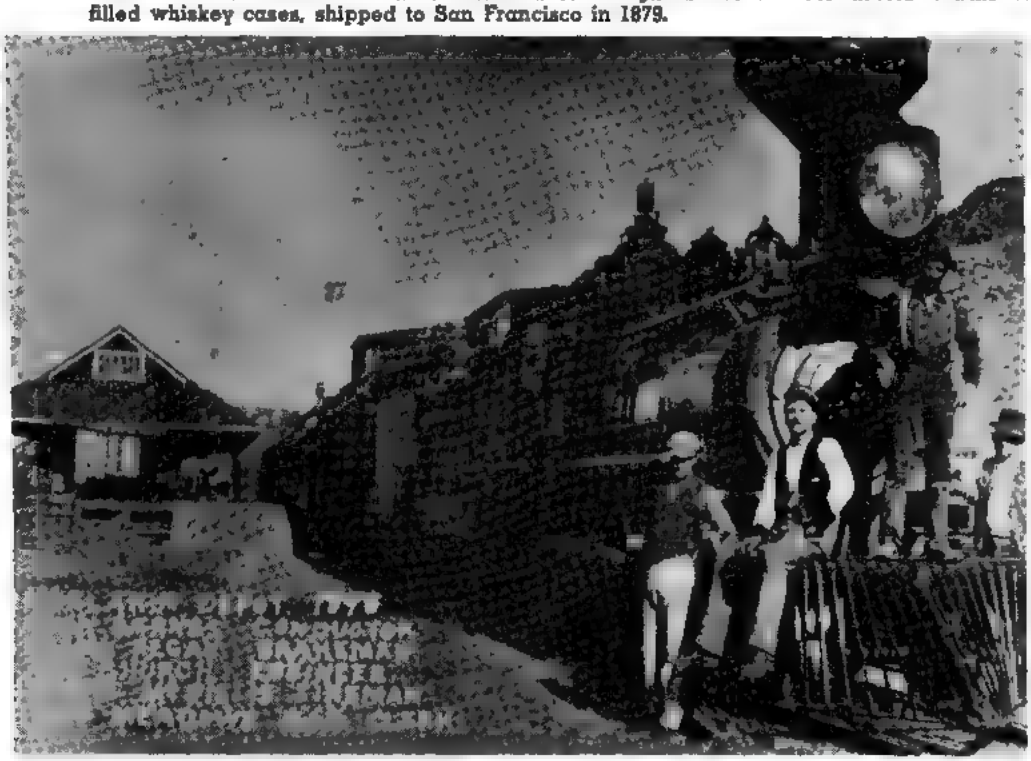
But no such factory ever was built.

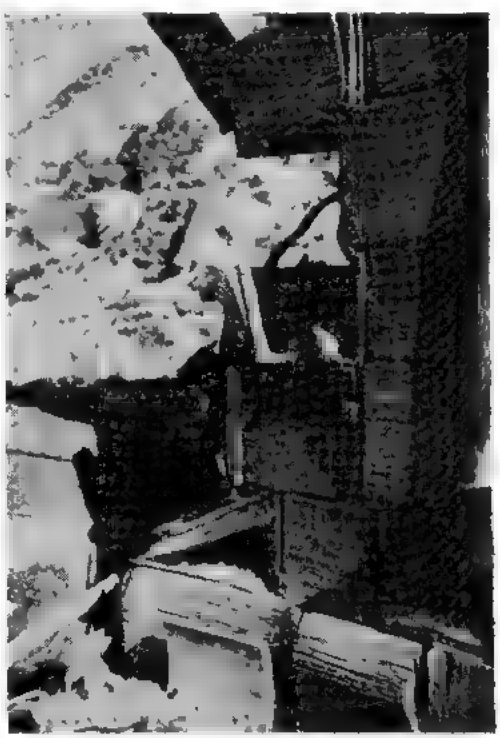
FOR more than fifteen years the sole inhabitants of Columbus have been Mr. and Mrs. John Callahan. Owners and operators of a turquoise mine in the nearby desert hills, the Callahans live in the old Molini place—an adobe cabin with embellishments of railroad ties, scrap lumber, and tin sheathing.

Spreading away from the Callahan's front door lies the old borax marsh—twenty square miles of glaring desola-

(Continued on page 36)

Left: Carson & Colorado RR at Candelaria, 1888. Right: Several of the miners' cabins in Pickhandle Gulch are constructed of earth-filled whiskey cases, shipped to San Francisco in 1879.





Illustrated by Al Martin Napoletano

When Wes Hardin fought the Mexican trail-drivers that day on Newton Prairie, the result was

Some Shooting!

BY HAROLD GLUCK

A RELIABLE gun was a necessity for the Westerner, whether he was on the right side of the law, the wrong side, or—as often happened with many men—smack dab in the middle. John Wesley Hardin, for example, had a harrowing experience with an old cap-and-ball six-shooter—an experience that almost cost him his life

Hardin was driving a herd of cattle on the Newton Prairie in Kansas. His herd was right in front of another herd driven by Mexicans. Friction developed when the Mexican herd kept crowding Hardin's cattle so closely that it took two or three hands to keep the cattle from getting mixed up. The Mexican trail boss rode forward and told Hardin to move his herd faster. Wes replied, "Take your herd to the outside of the trail. Plenty of room for everybody thataway."

The Mex trail boss cursed in Spanish, and pulled his riders off the "point" of his herd. What happened next can best be told in Hardin's own words:

"No one being in front of the cattle, they rushed right into my herd, so I turned them off to the left. The boss Mexican rode back to where I was and cursed me in Mexican. He said he would kill me with a rifle just as quick as he could get it from the wagon. In about five minutes I saw him coming back with a gun. He rode up to within about a hundred yards of me, got down off his horse, took deliberate aim at me and fired. The ball grazed my head, going through my hat and knocking it off. He tried to shoot again, but something got wrong with his gun and he changed it to his left hand and pulled his pistol with his right hand.

"He began to advance on me, shooting at the same time. He called up his crowd of six or seven Mexicans. In the meanwhile, Jim Clements, hearing I was in a row, had come to my assistance. I was riding a fiery gray horse and the pistol I had was an old cap-and-ball, which I had worn out shooting on the trail There was so much play between the cylinder and the barrel that it would not burst a cap or fire unless I held the cylinder with one hand and pulled the trigger with the other. I made several unsuccessful attempts to shoot the advancing Mexican from his horse, but failed. I then got down and tried to shoot and hold my horse, but failed in that too.

"Jim Clements shouted to me to 'turn that horse loose and hold the cylinder!' I did so and fired at the Mexican, who was now only ten paces from me. I hit him in the thigh and stunned him a little. I tried to fire again but snapped (misfired). The Mexican had evidently fired his last load, so we both rushed together in a hand-to-hand fight. The other Mexicans had by this time come close up and were trying to shoot me every chance they got. Jim Clements, seeing I had no chance to win, rushed between me and the other Mexicans and told them not to shoot, but to separate us, as we were both drunk and did not know what we were doing.

"ANOTHER MEXICAN, who had not been there at the beginning of the fight, then rode up and fired two shots at me, but missed. We covered him with

(Continued on page 38)

There was no barbed wire west of the Pecos in those days — but there was plenty of

Whiskey . Skunks

BY J. FRANK DOBIE

I DON'T KNOW whether the story I am about to relate is a whiskey story, a skunk story, or a rattlesnake story. Back in the days before barbed wire put a Spanish bit on free enterprise in the country west of the Pecos, Henry Williams was boss for the TX outfit. His range stretched up and down the Pecos River, following its meanderings, from old Fort Lancaster on the south to Pecos City to the north. The "city" part of Pecos City was then even less visible than it is now; some rock chimneys, bleak and deserted, marked the site of Fort Lancaster, as they do today. Cowboys riding out daily from a series of line camps prevented TX cattle from drifting away from their proper range.

To one of these camps Henry Williams drove up one evening about sundown in his buckboard. He found both riders in, preparing supper. They had their frying tin plates, and bed rolls in a small dugout pan, coffee pot, dutch oven, bean pot, roofed with poles and dirt. They were fixed up for the winter. The dugout door was on the south side and consisted of a piece of old tarp that lacked several inches of touching the ground. Despite the camp's open door policy, Henry Williams preferred to sleep outside. He always carried his own bed roll in the buckboard, along with coffee pot, some jerked beef and sourdough biscuits — dehydrated by time. He was prepared to be self-sufficient anywhere. After he had hobbled his team out, eaten supper, smoked three Bull Durham cigarettes, listened to the two cowboys express their views on Pecos River water as well as on several other subjects, and enjoyed —without saying so—a coyote serenade, he unrolled his bed beside the buckboard, pulled his hat over his eyes to preserve his complexion, and went to sleep.

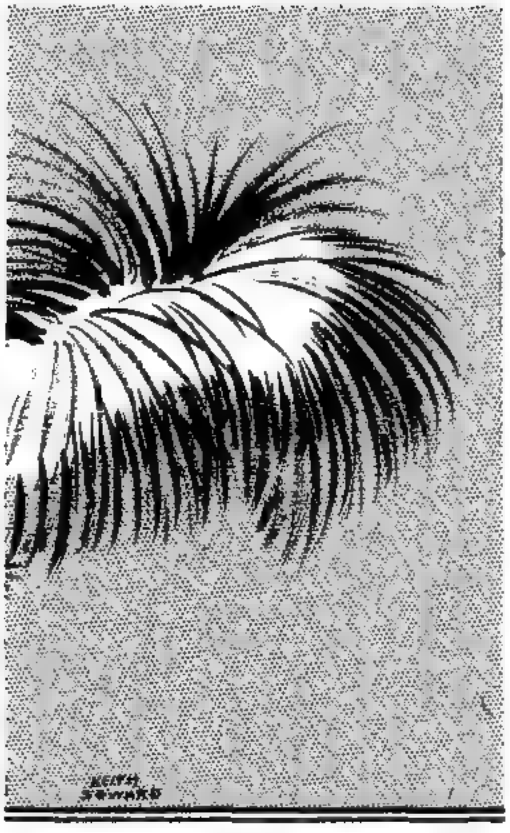
The two cowpunchers went inside the dugout to sleep. Presumably they did not cover their faces with their hats. Anyhow, along in the night one of them awoke the slumbering hills with a yell. A skunk had bit him through the nose. Skunks are always prowling at night for something to eat. To enter the dugout with its food smells was as natural for a skunk as to enter an old badger hole.

One summer night when I was a boy, a skunk came up into the open hall of our ranch house and bit into the big toe of a Mexican girl who was sleeping on a pallet spread on the floor. This was in Live Oak County, Texas, and the worst thing connected with a skunk that people in that part of the country generally feared was the little animal's fire-extinguisher. On west, any skunk that bit a human being was supposed to be a hydrophobia skunk. No cow camp ever conjured up any other terror as horrible as death resulting from the bite of a hydrophobia skunk.

And now in the middle of the night, away out in the middle of the vast and empty Pecos range, a long hundred miles from nowhere, this TX cowboy had a hydrophobia skunk biting into his nose. Somewhat curiously, the cowboy was called Snort—when he got close enough to anybody to be called anything. The episode in the dugout had no influence on changing his name. Snort was highly excited at the prospect of hydrophobia; his mate and Henry Williams were too.

Henry Williams always carried a bottle of whiskey with him for emergencies. He wanted to cheer Snort up and he told him that he'd heard a doctor say that whiskey was even better than a madstone for the bite of a hydrophobia skunk. Snort listened to the prescription, swallowed a big dose without flinching, and seemed to take a less gloomy view of his destiny.

HENRY WILLIAMS had heard of a kind of doctor having come to Midland, fully a hundred miles northeast of the dugout camp. No doctor had yet felt the call to settle in Pecos City. The hob-



liams downed coffee, steak, and hot biscuits. Then, while the fresh horses were being roped and harnessed, Snort sort of staggered out to the pen and sat down, leaning his back against the fence. He was beside a pile of old lumber. As soon as the team was hitched in, Henry Williams called Snort to come on. Snort didn't seem to make much effort to move and Williams walked toward him with the intention of helping him up.

JUST AS he got to the old lumber pile, Williams heard rattlesnake rattles whirring. He saw Snort put a hand out on the ground as if to raise himself up. He saw a monstrous rattlesnake plunge his fangs into the hand. The three Block Ranch cowboys said the only remedy they knew for snakebite was whiskey. That was the only remedy Henry Williams had ever heard of. They all encouraged Snort to take more medicine. He did. They got him into the buckboard and Henry Williams started off, just hitting the road in high places.

"I did not know whether the feller would go mad from skunk bite or die from snake bite," Henry Williams related later. "I didn't know what might happen. I jest kept bathing the butts of that fresh pair of horses and they laid down in the collars like a pair of Spanish mules. Snort was cooperating on the bottle right along. About an hour before noon he held the bottle up to the sun to show me it was empty. I grabbed it and throwed it away to lighten the load. That pair of Block ponies was pure buckskin. We got into Midland along early in the afternoon and found the doctor.

"He was a dentist but had practiced some on horses. All he knew to do for snake bite or skunk bite was give whiskey. Well, it looked like everybody in town wanted to provide medicine. We all kinder forgot, it seemed, who was the main patient and whether it was hydrophobia or rattlesnake poison this cowboy Snort had to be doctored for. I lost sight of him. I forgot about a lot of things.

"About sunup next morning, the weather sorter cleared and I set out to find Snort. I found him in a livery stable stall, asleep. I woke him up to ask him how he felt. He said he didn't recollect having been sick. He wanted to know how he'd come to make a trip to Midland. 'Why,' I says, 'in the first place you got skunk-bit and then you got rattlesnake-bit.' He wouldn't believe it. He wanted to know if a man could get a drink anywhere. I drove him back to the TX dugout. As far as I know, he never did recollect about the bites, and if he ever died I never heard of it."

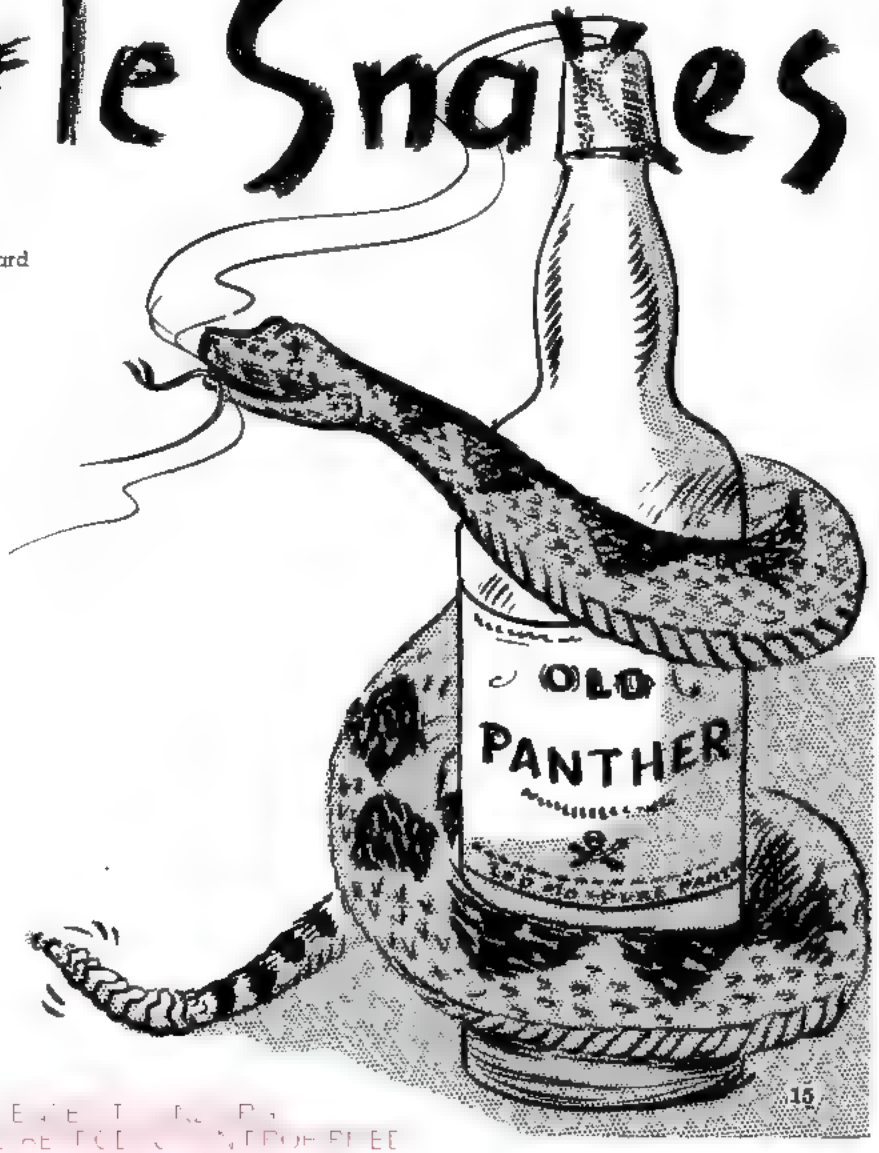
and Rattle Snakes

Illustrated by Keith Soward

bled horses, none too fresh, were brought in and hitched to the buckboard. Snort got up on the seat with Henry Williams; he did not forget to bring his medicine with him. Henry Williams headed for Midland and before long they saw daylight coming to meet them.

As the old cowboy song goes, "It was a long and lonesome go." The horses suffered for water. There wasn't any road—just a way. By dark, Snort had taken the last drop of medicine out of the quart bottle. They made a dry camp, let the horses rest and graze and then about three o'clock in the morning drove on. Snort became more despondent over the prospect of hydrophobia than he had been at any other time. Henry Williams was mightily relieved when, just at daybreak, he smelled coffee boiling and mesquite wood burning and knew they were at the Block Ranch.

Three cowboys were eating breakfast. They said yes, that a doctor of some sort had put down his stakes in Midland. It was still thirty-five miles or so to Midland. They would bring in a fresh team of horses to hitch to the buckboard. Meantime they had a quart of whiskey, always reserved for emergencies, and they were glad to help fight hydrophobia with it. In a melancholy, disinterested way, Snort began swallowing it, while Henry Wil-



Whiskey-drinking braggart though he was, nobody disputed Mike Fink's claim that he was

KING OF THE KEELBOATMEN

BY MARTIN MARECEK

Illustrated by Al Martin Napoletano

THE story of the expansion of the American frontier is the story of the rugged boatmen who moved along the great rivers. Typical of all the boatmen who ever handled an oar or pulled on a *cordelle* was one man, Mike Fink.

Around the campfires, in log cabins, and in taverns, circulated tall yarns of this rough, tough, drinking, shooting, brawling boatman who called himself King of the Keelboatmen. To this day, in some of the remote villages along the lower Mississippi, mothers frighten naughty children into good behavior with the dread warning: "Mike Fink'll git ye, if ye don't watch out!"

Mike spent his boyhood in the little frontier settlement of Fort Pitt; he grew up in an atmosphere where physical strength and endurance, marksmanship, and courage were the only worthwhile attributes and guarantee of survival. Beyond the little patches of cleared land surrounding the stockade at Fort Pitt lurked the hostile red man—a challenge young Mike could not ignore.

At sixteen, already a crack shot and deadly with the hunting knife and tomahawk, Mike joined the Pennsylvania Rangers. As a scout, he would travel alone deep into the Indian-haunted wilderness to spy on the sullen tribes. But Mike was not content to spy just for the purpose of gathering useful information. If he spotted a small hunting party of braves, he would trail them skillfully during the day waiting for darkness to settle down on the gloomy forest. Once the warriors were settled in their blankets and asleep, Mike would move in soundlessly as a shadow and cleave heads. He considered this a sport superior to hunting bears, and not nearly so dangerous.

Once he stalked a deer into an Indian-infested area where any error of woodscraft could mean quick death. He was taking aim at his quarry when he suddenly observed an Indian in a clump of brush sighting on the same deer. Now here *was* a jam—but Mike figured a way out. He pulled down on the Indian instead of the deer. At the precise split-second the Indian fired at the deer, Mike pulled trigger. The guns roared with one report—and both deer and Indian fell together. Mike slipped away through the woods and returned safely to the fort.

In Pitt, the taverns were the center of social activity. Mike was a steady customer and he learned to drink and fight with the best of them. Trappers, woodsmen, and rivermen all contributed to his education. In no time at all, the black-haired, husky youngster became noted for his whiskey-drinking capacity and ability to handle himself in any brawl.

AS the frontier moved westward and Pittsburgh became semi-civilized, Mike looked elsewhere for the excitement he craved. He had heard colorful tales of adventures on the Mississippi and the Ohio rivers, and he itched to get away and see for himself if they were true. He got his chance sooner than he expected.

One day the swaggering Fink was hurling insults at boatmen in a river front tavern. Promptly the powerful oarsman of one crew invited him to step out in the street and repeat his remarks. Outside, the pair of them went at it rough-and-tumble—no holds barred. Kicking, gouging, strangling, the two hardy youths fought for two hours before Mike finally wore his man down by sheer bulldog stubbornness. Dust-covered and bloody, victor and vanquished went arm-in-arm back into the tavern with the cheering spectators at their heels. Mugs of whiskey washed down dust and blood together. The patroon of the oarsman's keelboat set up another round of drinks and offered Mike a job. He accepted; and in that moment an American legend was born.

In his early river trips, Mike got an eye-full of young America pushing inland. He met all kinds of men: honest emigrants, thugs, thieves, and gamblers. Rugged men all, yet none tougher than the keelboatmen.

Mike Fink soon became known up and down the Ohio. For all his drinking and carousing, he became a top boatman and quickly won a reputation for delivering both goods and

He raised his rifle, fired—and Carpenter fell with a hole in the center of his forehead.

passengers in all kinds of weather and through the swiftest of tricky currents.

His fame and his trade grew, and he moved on to the "Big River," the Mississippi, with his boat and hardboiled crew. On the old Mississip' he acquired friends and enemies in every river town between St. Louis and New Orleans.

Weird are some of the tales told of Mike Fink on the Big River. Once, while lounging on deck with his crew at the St. Louis levee, he got to boasting of his skill with a rifle. Challenged to prove it, Mike took another swig at his jug of corn likker and chose for his target the rather prominent heel of a Negro lad sitting astride a barrel a hundred yards away. As he raised his rifle, Mike grinned: "I'll trim that feller's heel so he can wear a genteel boot." The rifle cracked, and the Negro scampered wildly up the levee screaming in pain.

The town marshal soon appeared, accompanied by the Negro's angry master. Mike was arrested and taken to the courthouse to be tried. His roughneck crew tagged along, cursing and peering at the marshal. Inside the courthouse, before a French justice, they kept up their raucous heckling.

The judge spoke half English and half French. Mike imitated the judge in broken English and the crowd roared with laughter. The judge waved his hands and yelled for quiet and the crowd yelled back. Finally the harried justice forsook English altogether and began to chatter in rapid-fire French. Sheer chaos resulted. In desperation, the little Frenchman ordered the marshal to clear the courtroom, Mike and all. Fink bowed from the waist and marched out at the head of his motley companions.

STEAMBOATS began to appear on the rivers after 1811, starting a new era and way of life in the domain of the keel and flatboatmen. As the steamers began to encroach upon the lucrative river trade, a bitter enmity sprang up between the old-time boatmen and the officers and crews of the hated "smoke-pots." War resulted whenever the rivals met, and Mike and his followers were always in the thick of the fighting.

For Mike, this senseless feud reached an idiotic climax in 1822. That fall, Mike and a young comrade named Carpenter were nearing St. Louis in a keel captained by Mike. Suddenly Captain Fink spied a steamer heading for the same narrow channel he was approaching, but in the opposite direction. Mike had been drinking heavily, and now he stood on the bow of his boat and bellowed to the skipper of the smoke-pot to make way. It was too late for the cumbersome steamer to change course, and Mike was too stubborn to give in. Both skippers held their course, heading straight for each other.

The steamboat's pilot blew his whistle furiously. Passengers crowded the steamer's rails and shouted in terror as the heavily loaded keel bore down on them. Steamboat and keel collided head-on. Both boats sank; a gaping hole in the keel and ripped seams, punched-in bow, and toppled stacks finishing off the steamboat. Passengers spilled into the Mississippi in scores. "Every man for himself!" yelled Mike as the stricken keel went down. He struck out for shore, swimming easily and powerfully.

ST. LOUIS, in that hectic year of 1822, was a rich and turbulent fur trading center situated at the edge of the frontier and the vast wilderness stretching beyond to the west. In its short history, the town had changed nationalities several times. Bejeweled Spanish ladies strolled the streets, dandy French gentlemen, sinewy *voyageurs*, blanketed Indians, and buckskin-clad mountain men. Mike and young Carpenter holed up in a river-front tavern and proceeded to enjoy themselves all that winter

The following spring the *Missouri Republican* carried an ad for "100 enterprising young men to follow Major Andrew Henry to ascend the Missouri River to its source for a period of perhaps two or three years."

Now here was a venture right down Mike's alley. He

(Continued on page 34)

Ishi, last of the Yahis!

America's last living link with Stone Age Man was broken at the death of Ishi, last of the Yahis.

"I AM A MAN"

BY LORENA ANN OLMSTEAD

IT was hot, and the surveyors' legs ached from tramping all day over uneven ground. Sweat poured into their eyes, and their heavy gear seemed to grow heavier by the second.

Suddenly, sharp-focused, unbelievable, they were seeing a scene from the pre-historic past. Every man in their party stopped short, hardly daring to breathe, lest the vision disappear. Before them, on a huge boulder at the edge of a brush-bordered creek, stood a powerfully built, naked, bronze man!

In his upraised right hand was a primitive, double-pronged fish spear, held high for the kill. For a thrilling instant the astonishing tableau held; then, with the grace and silence of the movement of a panther, the bronze man was gone—vanished like a dissolving wisp of smoke in the brush.

THAT incident occurred in 1908, on Deer Creek in the southern part of Tehama County, California. The surveyors knew they were on the ancient hunting grounds of the Yahi Indians, once a mighty tribe which had ruled the country around Deer and Mill Creeks near Oroville, but all members of the tribe were considered long extinct. Could one or more of these primitive Indians still exist? The possibility was fascinating, but incredible.

That night in camp the surveyors' eerie tale of a naked bronze savage armed with a spear was greeted with howls of laughter by the other members of the party who had not been along. The suggestion was made that they stumbled upon a cache of whiskey somewhere, rather than upon a Stone Age Yahi warrior.

Silenced, but unconvinced that they had been the victims of mass hallucination, the surveyors were back next day on the old Yahi hunting grounds. As they made their way warily through the underbrush, an arrow flashed out of the tangled vegetation to splinter against a rock a scant foot from the leader. He picked up the shaft and stared at it in amazement. The arrow was stone-tipped, like those used by primitive Americans centuries ago!

Alarmed but determined to solve the mystery, the men moved cautiously forward. In a little clearing, so cleverly concealed that only chance would reveal it to a seeker, they discovered a rude camp.

There was a squeal of terror as an old Indian fought his way through the tangled underbrush, urged on by a middle-aged woman who cuffed his naked rear to speed him along. The startled surveyors made no move to detain them.

A whimpering sound drew their attention to a pile of rabbit skins, and there they found an ancient crone so paralyzed with fright she could barely move. She pointed to her mouth, making feeble motions to show she was thirsty. A surveyer propped her up and held his canteen to her lips.

Now the men had reasonable proof that a remnant of the Stone Age Yahi tribe was still alive. This time their skeptical companions listened and believed. The next day they returned to the Indians' camp, only to find it deserted. Even the old woman was gone.

ANTHROPOLOGISTS from the University of California, keenly interested, hurried to the scene hoping to find the fugitives and ascertain if they were really Yahis. No trace remained of the mysterious Indians. Obviously they had fled to some secret hiding place known only to themselves.

Three years passed, and the strange incident was almost forgotten. Then, early one August morning in Oroville, a butcher on the outskirts of town was aroused by the excited barking of dogs. He sat up in bed and looked out the window.

Just below his house, hemmed in by the dogs, an Indian crouched motionless in the dirt of the corral. His coarse black hair was burned close to his head; he wore only a torn piece of rabbit fur across his thin shoulders.

The dogs were called off, but nobody could make anything of the wild-looking stranger. He couldn't—or wouldn't—answer their questions. Finally the sheriff of Butte County was called and told there was a wild man loose—and to come pick him up.

In jail, the Indian remained mute. Seeing that he was hungry, terrified, and close to total exhaustion, the sheriff fed him and let him sleep.

Upon the Indian's awakening, every man in Oroville who knew any Indian dialect tried it on the stranger without success. He merely squatted in his cell, watching every move of his captors, his black eyes tragic and questioning.

At the University of California, Dr. T. T. Waterman heard of the strange Indian. "I'll bet he's a Yahi!" he exclaimed. Armed with a long list of Yahi words, he boarded the next train for Oroville.

As a preliminary test, Dr. Waterman tried various Indian dialects on the prisoner without eliciting the slightest response. Then he pointed to the wooden frame of the cot on which the man was lying and pronounced a strange word· "*Si-win-i,*" meaning in the Yahi tongue, yellow pine.

Instantly, the Indian's somber face came alive. He smiled, pointing excitedly to the cot, and repeating over and over: "*Si-win-i, Si-win-i!*"

In a short time, Dr. Waterman learned that he was indeed a Yahi and that his name was Ishi, meaning "I Am a Man." Without doubt, this was the same man the surveyors had seen three years before. He was the last of his tribe. At all cost, he must be saved so that science could learn something of the customs and language of his vanished people.

Arrangements were made for Ishi to go with Dr. Waterman to the University of California, where a room was fitted

Illustrated by Clay McGaughy

A powerfully built bronze man stood at the edge of the creek: in his upraised right hand was a primitive spear, held high for the kill.

up for him at the Museum of Anthropology. There, the regents of the University appointed him a lifetime assistant janitor with a salary of twenty-five dollars per month.

Ishi's hair, which he had burned close to his head when his mother, father, and sister died, grew long again. He accepted white men's clothes as he did many other strange things, but he rarely wore the stiff shoes of civilization. As he had no way to procure the soft moccasins he preferred, he walked barefoot.

EVENTUALLY he learned to speak English haltingly, and his vocabulary of several hundred words took care of his needs. Some of his English words were picked up from youngsters visiting the Museum, and were more than a little picturesque.

"Sure Mike," and a patient, puzzled smile was his invariable answer when he wasn't quite sure what was expected of him. He was always pleasant and eager to please the men who fed and clothed him. If he sometimes wondered why visitors laughed at him, he never grew angry, never lost his native dignity.

Ishi's reactions to the strange new world in which he found himself were never predictable. Things expected to amaze him left him unimpressed. For example, he explained that the high buildings of San Francisco and Oakland were not as high as his native crags.

Electric lights he accepted as just another evidence of white men's magic. On the other hand, water from a faucet was a source of never-ending delight.

People interested him and he never tired of watching the throngs as they passed along the city streets. In his entire former life, he had never seen more than twenty people at one time. Now he marveled at the sight of thousands of white people jammed into small areas.

An ordinary match was perhaps the most entrancing miracle he found in the civilized world. In the primitive world he had left it was work to start a fire by the ancient bowstring method. Better than any white man, he could appreciate the priceless gift of the tiny sliver of wood that called up the Flame God in an instant.

A mechanical gadget also intrigued him, if it was something that came within the limited range of his early experience. If it did not, he immediately lost interest.

One amusing incident was Ishi's first meeting with a window shade. He tried to push it aside and it wouldn't push. He attempted to lift it, only to have it drop back into place when he released it.

Dr. Waterman carefully explained the mechanism and showed him how to give it a slight jerk so it would automatically roll up. An hour later he was still gravely raising and lowering the shade, apparently trying to discover where it disappeared when raised. *(Continued on page 28)*

Outsmarted by a Coyote

BY JIM PRENDERGAST

Illustrated by B. D. Tittsworth

Hunter against coyote — and the coyote kept winning!

I claim a coyote is the smartest thing on four legs. That's not just a guess, but the considered opinion of a veteran coyote hunter and trapper. It's hard, exciting work and, man, it's fun! Yet, if it wasn't for the *hungry* coyotes getting caught now and then, the game would soon lose its appeal for the hunter.

I doubt if there is such a thing as a dumb coyote. I figure when one is caught, it's just a question of a hungry coyote finding a bait surrounded by well-concealed traps and letting his hunger over-rule his caution. And sometimes you tackle an extra-smart brute that won't go near a set no matter how hungry he is.

I played hide-and-seek with one coyote that never got hungry enough to eat on a kill a second time and never touched food he didn't himself kill. This feller had everything figured down to a gnat's eyebrow. His wisdom was uncanny. Over the two years I followed him, I know he laughed at me a thousand times. I could *feel* his amusement, even when I couldn't see him. That sounds loco, I know, but any coyote hunter or trapper will know exactly what I mean.

We got real well acquainted. That is, *he* got acquainted with me but I wasn't smart enough to get wise to all his tricks. He fooled me when he was just a pup and kept on fooling me. He was the most ruthless killer I ever knew.

I found a den of five pups one day and dug 'em out. When I'd get one I'd sock him on the head to scalp 'em later for the bounty. I had four scalps in a pile and reached for the fifth.

All I did was reach. The little sonofagun jumped up and ran into the brush and I couldn't catch him. I noticed he had a crooked foot and it marked him the rest of his life. It was the right front foot and it stuck out to the side. Maybe he was given extra intelligence to compensate for the bum foot because he was one coyote that never got a trap snapped on him.

I saw him plenty of times when he was a little squirt and he never seemed to get hungry enough to go to my bait. I carried a .30-30 carbine and was pretty handy with it, but the summer that pup did most of his growing I sure wasted a lot of shells on him. He stayed alone all summer, but late in the fall he took up with a couple of older ones and learned how to kill sheep. The older he got the faster he learned.

SHEEPHERDERS all talked about three coyotes that worked on their bands and they wanted me to catch them. Each herder had the same story; one coyote had a crooked foot that turned out, and they were the worst killers they ever had trouble with. They'd come into a band of sheep at night, kill three or four, but eat on just one. They'd stay away for a few days till the herder relaxed then, BINGO, more dead sheep!

I set traps around their kills and in the runaways. I caught skunks, coons, even hawks, along with a few other coyotes, but not the three I wanted. It was late spring when the ground got soft before I snagged the two old ones, but Crooked Foot always went around the sets.

During lambing season he worked alone. I'd see him hide in the brush; I'd know about where he lay, but the dirty soandso would get a lamb right under my nose and make off with it. Day or night, when he wanted mutton, he got it—and I couldn't do a thing about it. Where he had me was, that, one day, he'd hit one band and next day he'd be somewhere else.

I was plenty disgusted and the sheepmen thought I wasn't any good. They offered fifty dollars for the coyote with the crooked foot. I was catching coyotes every day but not that one.

That reward filled the country with trappers but I figured the fifty should be mine after all the trouble I'd had. Of course I'd be glad for anybody to get him but I wanted him just to satisfy that feeling of revenge.

A government man came along and he knew his stuff - but so did Crooked Foot. This trapper put out cyanide guns, poison, and enough traps to cover the whole country. Traps were so thick I was afraid to walk for fear I'd get in somebody's set. We caught everything from bobcats to magpies. Except for that one, the country was as free of coyotes as a horsethief is of conscience. And Crooked Foot was still eating mutton.

I borrowed some dogs. Good dogs, they told me. They'd never been known to quit a trail and were best on coyotes.

I figured Lonetree camp would be Crooked Foot's next stop and took the dogs there. After a couple of days I spotted him with my glasses at the edge of some tall sand grass. I didn't know it was Crooked Foot, but I hoped it was and circled him.

He looked up, gave us a snooty look, waved his tail and trotted back into the brush. I took the dogs over and, sure enough, there was the crooked track. The dogs took the trail and I patted myself on the back thinking I'd have that coyote *pronto*.

I could hear the dogs singing. They'd come back pretty close, then go away again. I waited awhile then wallowed

ELECTRONIC

I took plenty of time aiming, held solid and squeezed off the slug.

through some brush and over rocks to where I'd heard them last. After a half hour I heard the faint baying of the hounds. They were coming closer. I might get a shot.

I hid in a clump of brush and it wasn't long before Crooked Foot came over a hill into wide open country. He was headed straight for me and wasn't showing much speed. I pumped a shell in and waited. Down the slope he came. Two hundred yards! Too far! I'd wait. The sweat started to run down my face, something began chewing on my back. I got a leg cramp and squeezed the carbine to keep from shaking

A hundred yards and he was bending to the left. It was a wide open shot and I swear I put it right through him. The dirt kicked up just beyond him. It had to be a hit—but it wasn't.

He was in the brush now and it was up to the dogs. They were running stronger than the coyote and again I felt sure I'd get him. I figured that when the dogs caught him they'd kill him and that's all there'd be to it.

I started to follow. I climbed hills for maybe a mile and there I met the dogs coming back. Their tongues were hanging out and their sides heaving, so I knew it hadn't been long since they caught him.

I had to find him. I wanted the fifty bucks but I wanted that Crooked Foot more. The dogs didn't look like they'd been in a fight but probably the coyote was so fagged out he couldn't do much. They must have killed him though, or they'd stay with him.

I didn't know enough to take the dogs with me when I backtracked them; they went on into camp. I followed tracks on to a ledge of rock about six feet high and there the crooked track ended. The dogs had gone all around the ledge several times, that was all I could tell.

I followed the ledge with my gun ready. Somewhere on top of that ledge Crooked Foot was either dead or resting. I climbed the ledge and looked along it. I came to a gap about ten feet wide. I couldn't jump that far, so I slid down and walked along to where I could get back up again.

NO coyote. Either something ate him or he took wings and flew away. The country was so rocky I couldn't tell if he'd been there or not. There weren't any dog tracks showing, either. They must have killed him, but I sure couldn't find him. I wouldn't get the fifty bucks but it eased my mind to know he was done for.

I went back to camp, tired, but glad I wouldn't have to meet his cunning any more. I felt a little sorry for the sonofagun. Too bad to leave him out and not even get that foot.

I took the dogs home and told the story as I saw it. Everybody thought it was a good ending; they wouldn't have to listen to any more tales about him. I figured I had a vacation coming and took three weeks.

I hadn't been home an hour when a sheep rancher came to see me. He was all excited and mad as a wet hen. He didn't wait to say hello, just busted into me. "I thought you was the guy that killed Crooked Foot!" he yapped.

"I didn't say I killed him, I said the dogs did."

"*Nobody* killed that damn coyote. He hit my sheep last night and killed seven. Alone too. Not another track there."

He made me sore, so I got tough, too. "What's the matter with *you?*" I griped. "Getting so stingy you won't hire a herder? The sheep must have been alone or the dog would have stirred up a fuss before he could kill seven."

"The herder was right there and so were two dogs," he spit at me. "The herder told me that coyote went through the band tearing the guts out of every sheep he got close to. You better get back there and see what you can do about it."

What kind of a deal was this? Maybe there were *two* crooked footed coyotes, or this one might have some extra lives. He might be a ghost and that was why he didn't fall when I shot through him. What if he couldn't be killed and kept me after him year after year and him killing sheep every day?

Well, Crooked Foot, here we go again! I went to saddle my horse and while I was tying on some traps and a pick and shovel, I decided to quit trapping

There's no money in this job since so many guys cleaned out everything. But I got to thinking about Crooked Foot and how to outwit him. It's just about the same as having some guy slap your face. You get mad and slap back then the scrap is on. So I went after him again.

I'd picked up some new scent that was supposed to be irresistible to coyotes. I took that and went out to where the old boy used to cross from one band to another. I set some traps on his trail and smeared the new perfume around good and plenty. From there I went to a band of sheep I thought he might hit next and hung around for a day or so. Then I learned he'd hit some place else. He'd outsmarted me again.

SOMEBODY suggested that I get a good running dog that would fight. Twenty miles away I found one. He looked like a cross between a bull moose and a mountain lion. He had wire hair about the color of an old cowchip, a big head, long

(Continued on page 33)

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ON PROHIBITED

THE JEST THAT BACKFIRED

By Burr H. Mallory

He had that train robbed—but he made the fatal mistake of scaring an express messenger armed with an ice hammer.

SPRING was coming to the Big Bend country, but there was still a chill in the air when Number Nine, the Sunset Limited on the Southern Pacific, pulled away from the water tank at Dryden, Texas, on the night of March 13, 1912. The powerful locomotive headlight sent a bright gleam along the rails running toward the hills behind which the sun had recently disappeared beyond Piasano.

Miss Carrie Frink, the telegraph operator and station agent, turned out the lights in the depot and locked the door before she turned toward town.

Express messenger Dave Truesdale closed the side door of the express car and returned to his desk to work on some of his reports. His assistant busied himself arranging the various bags and boxes to be unloaded at Sanderson, the next stop.

Engineer Grosh pulled up on the Johnson bar as the big locomotive gathered speed. When the train passed the bobbing switch lamp at the western end of the side track it was making good time up the steep grade that lay ahead.

No one on the train had seen the man who had emerged from the darkness under the water tank and climbed up on the back of the locomotive tender just as the Limited was getting under way. The surprise was complete when a masked man with a six-gun in each hand appeared suddenly in the engine gangway.

"Keep right on going and do as I tell you and you won't get hurt," the bandit ordered Grosh and his fireman. "Don't try to signal the crew of that freight train!" he added harshly, as a freight, standing on a siding a short distance ahead, was suddenly outlined in the glare of the Limited's headlight.

The Limited thundered past the motionless freight train at such speed that none of the crew caught a glimpse of the masked bandit in the engine cab. The Limited reached the top of the grade and engineer Grosh eased off on the throttle as the train plunged down into the winding maze of Baxter's Canyon.

"Stop the train on the other side of that long trestle so that just the front end of the first passenger coach is across on the ground," snapped the bandit.

Grosh eased the locomotive to a stop. Another masked man, carrying two Winchesters, climbed up into the cab. The first bandit took one of the rifles. "Watch these guys while I get the baggage car uncoupled," he said gruffly.

CONDUCTOR HENRY ERKEL, looking out a coach window to see why the train had stopped, realized that it was standing on a trestle. He hurried forward to the door at the head end of the smoking car. The door was open, and through it Erkel could see brakeman Coskrey engaged in uncoupling the baggage and mail cars at the head of the train, under the supervision of a masked man with a Winchester. The bandit spotted the conductor and curtly ordered him to assist in the operation.

When the job was completed and the cars separated, Erkel and Coskrey were ordered back into the smoking car. The locomotive, with the baggage and mail coaches, disappeared around a jutting rock in the canyon.

The two postal clerks in the mail car were surprised to hear a knock at their side door, as they knew the train had not had time to reach Sanderson. They opened the door and found themselves covered by a Winchester in the hands of a masked man standing beside the track. At the bandit's command, they descended to the ground and knocked on the door of the express car, asking the messenger to open it. Dave Truesdale opened the door to look into the muzzle of the bandit's rifle. The postal clerks preceded the masked gunman in-

Instantly, Truesdale struck with the hammer. The bandit toppled forward.

Illustrated by Al Martin Napoletano

Photos Courtesy J. S. Fletcher

to the car. Under the menace of the cocked Winchester, the two clerks, Truesdale, and his assistant, huddled against the s de of the car

The bandit went first to the opposite side of the car and took the expressmen's revolvers from the belts where they hung on the wall and tossed them out the open door.

"Who's the messenger?" he demanded.

"I am," Truesdale answered.

"Okay," the bandit growled. "*You* stand still. You other guys get over there," indicating the side of the car away from the open door. "Don't try any funny business if you want to stay healthy!"

"Now," said the holdup man, turning to Truesdale, "open the safe."

"It's locked," Truesdale replied.

MOVING swiftly, the bandit shifted the rifle to his left hand and struck the messenger heavily in the face with his right fist. Truesdale staggered, fell over a box and sprawled on the floor, tasting the salty tang of blood in his mouth from his mashed lips. Forgetting caution in his anger, he sprang to his feet and rushed the bandit. The man whipped out his six-gun and smashed the expressman savagely across the cheekbone and temple with the barrel, knocking him down again.

"Goddam you, get busy and open that safe!" snarled the gunman. "Next time you'll get a slug instead of the barrel! You got thirty seconds to make up your mind."

Slowly, the bandit holstered his six-gun, waiting for Truesdale to make his decision.

The messenger realized that it was hopeless to oppose this armed brute under the circumstances. He rose to his feet and stumbled dizzily across the car to the safe. Kneeling before it, with the blood dripping from his battered face, he felt the muzzle of the Winchester prodding the small of his back as he worked the combination.

The safe door swung open; the bandit glanced inside.

"Get that bag out of there," he ordered, pointing to a canvas sack. Truesdale pulled out a money sack consigned to the bank in Alpine, Texas, containing $60,000 in currency. The bandit hefted it—then whirled on the messenger.

"This isn't the shipment for El Paso. Where is it?"

"This is the only currency shipment we have," lied Truesdale.

Bodies of Ben Kilpatrick (left) and Welch after the holdup.

"How about that other bag?" the bandit queried, motioning to another sack.

"Just some cancelled checks going to the bank at Marfa," replied Truesdale, poker-faced. The sack contained over $30,000 in specie.

The gunman hesitated; then barked: "Get out them registered packages and rip 'em open. *Move!*"

Obediently, the messenger pulled out the registered packages and opened them. The bandit selected several gold watches and other articles of value

"Empty them onions out of that bag over there and give it to me," he ordered.

Truesdale obeyed, handing him the empty sack for his loot.

The loaded burlap bag and the money sack made a sizable load for a man burdened with a rifle and six-gun. The bandit glanced at them, then grinned at Truesdale.

"You're a pretty husky *hombre*—how about trailing along with us to carry this plunder till we reach the Rio Grande? That's as far as we'll need you."

THE express messenger's heart chilled at the sinister implication of the gunman's words. It would be a one-way trip for him. A few short miles over the rough country to the river—and then a bullet in the back. His lifeless body would be mute evidence of the direction taken by the bandits; but he would never be available to identify this man at some later date in court . . . Truesdale's brain whirled, weighing his chances. Should he risk a fight now? He could risk the desperate gamble that the gunman would not shoot, but even then—weakened as he was—could he hold this big husky long enough to give the other men in the car a chance to come to his aid? Was there another bandit just outside the car door? Maybe he should gamble on the chance of escaping on the way to the river . . .

The bandit looked at him and grinned his sardonic grin. "Well, buddy, have you figured things out? Come on, let's go!"

"Can I put on my coat?" Truesdale asked, stalling for time.

Left: Ed Welch who was killed with Kilpatrick in the train holdup near Sanderson, Texas, March 13, 1912. Right: Ben Kilpatrick, as a convict in the penitentiary at Columbus, New Mexico.

"Sure," the bandit shrugged. "Hell, wear your hat too!"

Truesdale turned to get his coat hanging on a peg at the side of the car, all the time looking frantically for some sort of weapon he could use in defense of his life. He spied a little cast-iron hammer used to break ice for oyster shipments, and as he put on his coat, managed to slip it inside the coat sleeve. He turned toward the bandit, who was calmly smoking a cigarette near the open door.

"Say!" exclaimed Truesdale as he approached the gunman. "Here's a package I overlooked." He reached down and pulled a neatly wrapped package from the safe and dropped it on the floor between himself and the bandit. The man tossed his cigarette out the open door, put his Winchester between his knees, and leaned forward to pick up the package. The movement brought the back of his head directly in front of the expressman.

INSTANTLY, Truesdale struck with the hammer. The bandit toppled forward on his hands and knees, and Truesdale struck again. The gunman collapsed limply on his face.

The other trainmen in the car rushed forward and took the fallen bandit's guns. The lights in the car were extinguished and a barricade of trunks and boxes was hastily thrown up facing the open door. Fearfully, the four trainmen strained their eyes and ears to catch some indication of movement outside in the darkness.

Finally, Truesdale fired two shots from the Winchester through the car roof. Soon someone came hurrying along the side of the mail car. Then a head was faintly discernable in the open doorway of the express car, but not sufficiently distinct to make a good target. A voice inquired anxiously, "Ben, are you in there?"

Then the man climbed up between the express car and the mail car in an effort to look into the darkened car through the small window at the end. His head and shoulders were suddenly silhouetted in the end window, thrown into sharp relief by the light from the end window of the adjacent mail car. Truesdale whipped up the Winchester and fired. The figure disappeared from the window, and they heard the dull thud of a body falling between the two cars.

The trainmen in the express car waited for what seemed an eternity, and then, from far off in the distance, came the repeated long blasts of a locomotive whistle, reverberating through the canyon. This could mean only one thing; that their situation was known. Otherwise, no train would have dared come out on the main line in the face of the Limited. Soon the headlight of the approaching engine flashed from wall to wall of the canyon, and finally halted just a short distance from the Limited locomotive.

SHERIFF JOE BEAN, of Terrell County, and a number of deputies leaped from the coach behind the newly arrived locomotive and fanned out around the baggage and mail cars.

The lights flashed on again in the baggage car, and the sheriff heard the story of the holdup and what had happened later. The dead bandit in the car was identified as Ben Kilpatrick, about the last member of the infamous Hole-in-the-

(Continued on page 40)

A 92-year-old veteran of the Old West tells of

Buffalo Bill

AS I KNEW HIM

BY M. I. McCREIGHT

EDITOR'S NOTE: The author of this article was a buyer and shipper of buffalo bones on the Plains in the 1880's. A lifelong friend and defender of the Indian, he is now living at The Wigwam, in Dubois, Pennsylvania. On his property is an old-time Council House of the Mohawk tribe of the Six Nations, the Iroquois Confederacy that ruled the Eastern forests for hundreds of years before the coming of the white man. The esteem in which Mr. McCreight is held by the Mohawks is best illustrated by the following tribute written last New Year's Day by Aren Akweks, present head chief of that tribe:

Mr. M. McCreight,
Sago Skenno-Kowa
Tonikonrate, Brother:

Hogansburg, N. Y. Reservation.

Your Christmas greeting arrived here, and I have put it in our record book of the Akwesasne Mohawk Counselors so that our members can read your words and think on your thoughts. Brother, your message tells us that soon you will take the Sunset Trail where our ancient Fathers will welcome and greet you as one of themselves. It will make our hearts unhappy when you leave us . . . You will be remembered by the truths that you have written in your many books and articles about the Indians, our Fathers. Your words will be read by many and they will change the thoughts of many white folks who will read them. So, though your body may pass on, your thoughts will continue to live and speak for us . . . Always know that our hearts are with you . . . You are an INDIAN born again in a white body; sent here by our Creator to tell the world today the true story of our people. When you leave Mother Earth, you will return to your real self and our Ancient Ones will welcome you with outstretched arms. The prairies and forests will look golden and green to you and your moccasins will walk on smooth grasses. The sky will be blue, and here and there from skin and bark lodges you will see smoke rising into the sky. Your ears will hear the good music of singing voices, which will blend with the tom-tom music that belongs to this great Island. The faces you will see will be dark faces, and they will be smiling at you as you walk to greet them.

Remember this, Brother; this is how it will be for you.

Your Brother,
Aren Akweks

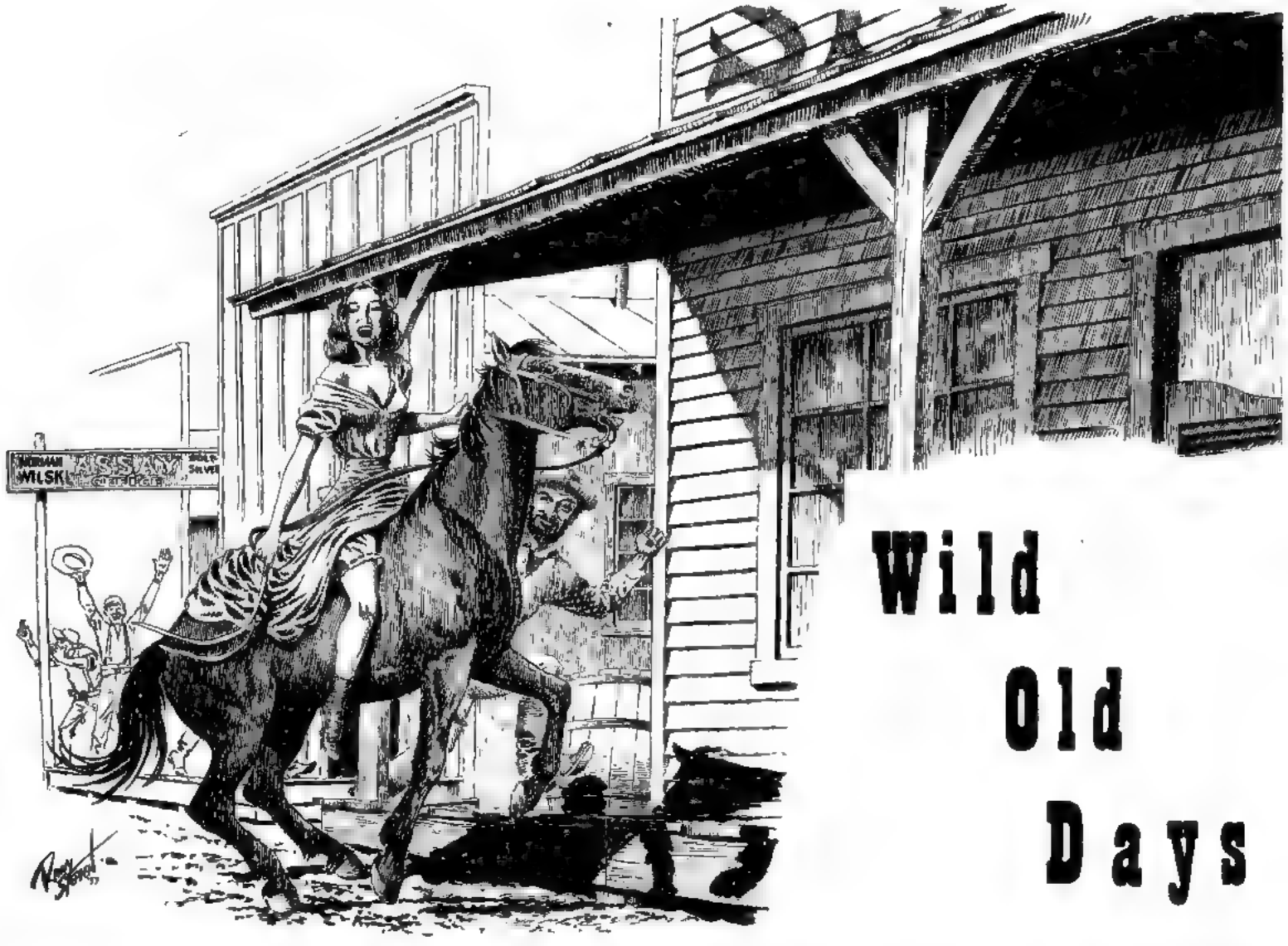
I first met Colonel Cody in 1887-88. He was then traveling with his new Wild West. Twice, or perhaps three times, he brought his show to Dubois, where it always drew large crowds

His last visit to the town was in 1908, when an overflow crowd attended what was perhaps the Colonel's outstanding performance. On this visit, he had 150 Indians and more than 150 horses and ponies. All the performers were in rare form, and the show simply sparkled.

It was on this occasion that Mrs. McCreight and myself had Colonel Cody and Chief Iron Tail for dinner at our town house. We had also present to meet him, Monroe McCanles. Monroe, at the age of twelve, had stood beside his father, Dave McCanles, when Wild Bill Hickok shot him dead from behind a curtain. Then and there, for the first time, Colonel Cody heard the facts of that historic murder.

I owned then the first Rambler automobile seen in those parts, and drove the Colonel and Chief Iron Tail out to see The Wigwam. Both were greatly impressed with the situation and the sweeping view from the hilltop. Resting and smoking, we three sat fronting the big fireplace to talk over Old West times. The flames crackled, the wind sang in the chimney, and

(Continued on page 41)



Wild Old Days

SALTY GALS

BY MAGGIE RED OLDHAM

THE pages of many so-called "Western" magazines are cluttered with the desperate deeds of assorted badmen and gunslingers while the female characters of the Old West are practically ignored. You hear occasionally of Calamity Jane, Belle Starr, and Poker Alice; beyond them, the ladies are merely scenery in the frontier towns. Actually, many a gal emulated the colorful exploits of the adventuresome, gun-toting males. California, for example, boasted a few of these frisky fillies in the old gold-mining days.

There was the "Crying Squaw" who ranged around Sonora way, placering her own gold from the bountiful gulches. How she gained her title is not on record. She was not a squaw, but a very attractive young white woman. Furthermore, she was never known to resort to the feminine subterfuge of tears to gain what she wanted.

Pistol-belted, she would weekly take her gold clean-up into Sonora or Columbia and buy needed supplies; then with the remaining gold she would set out to buck the faro banks in every gambling joint in town.

Her big thrill was in calling, or attempting to call, the last turn of the cards which paid off the successful guesser at four to one. Win or lose, she would leave that house and go on to the next, always puncturing the air with pistol shots en route to the next game.

This was the Crying Squaw's regular weekly routine. Sometimes, woman-like, she got plumb careless in her shooting, narrowly averting human casualties and becoming something of a nuisance.

She told over and over again the same bear story—and stuck to it. The yarn went that she had roped a bear and her horse couldn't hold it. She quit the steed and lit out a-running for her shack. Promptly the bear mounted the horse and chased her into the house. The horse ran smack-dab through the door and scraped the bear off!

"BAREBACK BILLIE," a girl in her middle teens, was another California product who was a constant headache to bartenders and saloon swampers in Columbia (now a State park), when that old mining camp had a population of thousands.

Billie had a yen for riding horses without saddle—anybody's horses. She would enter a feed lot, corral, livery barn or stage station, bridle any horse she could walk up to, straddle the beast and ride hell without leather for the main stem.

Billie heralded her coming in spectacular fashion. In her clothespin stance astride her mount, her long dress jammed high above shapely legs displaying flour sack undies, she would "yippee" along the street, cheered by the spectators, and ride through the first saloon door the horse could enter.

Billie's previous exploits of a like nature tipped off the thirsty crowd on the street. They too would crowd through the saloon's front door in her wake. Well inside the barroom and surrounded by the enthusiastic populace, Billie demanded as the price of her departure that the barkeep "set 'em up" to one and all on the house. She never lost; the price was a small one to pay to get rid of her boisterous presence.

Later, peace came to the harried barkeeps when Billie and a tinhorn gambler disappeared simultaneously, to the regret of none

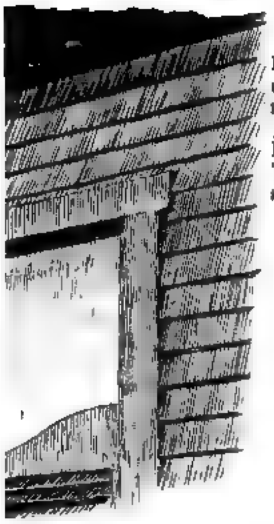
Yes sirree, there were other females in the Old West beside bandit queens and dancing girls with hearts of gold!

RED SNOW ON THE LITTLE SALMON

BY VICTOR DURDEN

IN the Salmon River Mountain country of Idaho, during those dark and thirsty days of depression and prohibition, John Atkins and John Wedding, old-time prospecting partners, were, like many of their neighbors, frequently hard put for beans and sow-belly. To keep the wolf from their cabin door on the Little Salmon, in the canyon just north of New Meadows Valley, they cultivated and endeavored to market a field of beautiful raspberries.

Sales were slow. Finally, with the berries over-ripe and unsold, the two Johns fermented the tasty fruit into wine and



In her clothespin stance astride her mount, her long dress jammed above shapely legs, Billie would "yippee" along the street.

tried bootlegging, a common and not unpraiseworthy occupation at the time. But despite the attractive features of their converted produce, sales were still slow.

In a sudden burst of inspiration, the two brand-new bootleggers sent off a letter to Congress in Washington, asking, in all sincerity and innocence, for expert advice and assistance in the marketing of thirty barrels of fine raspberry wine. They had been told, they wrote, that the kindly Government sometimes assisted in the disposition of such products, especially when manufactured by its rural citizens.

In due time, on a clear January morning, two Government men appeared at the partners' cabin on the Little Salmon

The two Johns were elated—until the agents did a shocking and incredible thing. Calmly they smashed open the thirty barrels and poured the sparkling wine down the snowy hillside. For many weeks, until new snow covered the spot, a huge crimson area an acre or more in size, remained visible to startled passersby.

Because of their age and obvious naivete, the stunned old partners received only a stern admonition for their violation of the Volstead Act. The utter loss of their year's labor and the amusement of their friends seemed punishment enough.

John Atkins and John Wedding are long dead now, but travelers along the canyon that January still remember the year of the red snow on the Little Salmon.

TRAPPED TENDERFOOT

BY FRED GIPSON

THE GRAZER was up to his usual game of baiting the tenderfoot hunters.

"I were hunting out in the Mogollons, see," he began on the cornered youngster. "I'm follering a narrer ledge up the side of a mounting. I round a shoulder on the cliff wall and face up with a grizzly b'ar. We're in hand-shaking distance, and the grizzly's up on his hind feet, ready to shake.

"I wheel so fast I trip and fall flat on my face. Lose my grip on my gun. Yonder she goes, off the edge of the cliff. I come to my feet, with cold snakes crawling up my backbone. I make some hurry-up tracks.

"Ain't run fifty steps till I face up with a mounting lion. He's been stalking me on this ledge. He flattens his belly to the rocks, twitching the end of his tail.

"Here I am, in a pickle, for sartin. No gun. Grizzly at my back. Mounting lion fixing to spring. Cliff on my left stands a mile high, straight up—a lizard couldn't climb it. Off to my right, I can look straight down plumb into the Misty Beyond. What do I do now? It's sure a proposition."

Here the Grazer stopped, bit off a cheekful of tobacco and chewed in reflective silence.

The wide-eyed tenderfoot couldn't wait. "What happened?" he demanded. "How'd you ever escape?"

"Escape!" exclaimed the Grazer. "Hell, there *waren't* no escape. They got me. But I'll just be dog if I can recollect yit which un done it!"

HANDLING THE RIATA

BY BURL TUTTLE

SIX STRANDS of tightly plaited steerhide, seventy feet long, coiled neatly at the saddle-horn—that's a *riata*. Invaluable tool of the cowboy and *vaquero*, it is used mostly in Southern Arizona and in old Mexico. Its proper preparation requires patient hours of cutting, scraping, stretching, and weaving. In the hands of an expert like old Jingle-Bob Jones, a veteran of the Arizona ranges, the *riata* leaps to life.

"Lots o' cowhands won't use one of these here rawhide ropes," Jingle-Bob told me. "Me—I find 'em best for everyday work."

The old cowboy was silent while he produced Bull Durham and papers and rolled himself a cigarette. I waited.

"First off," went on Jingle-Bob, "'twas the Mexican *vaquero* that started ropin' with the *riata*. Far away from stores where he could git grass ropes, he made his own.

"Fellers that use the *riata* have to dally that is, take turns around the saddle-horn to hold a critter. You see, rawhide will stand an awful pull if you kin let her slip a little, but any quick hard jerk will bust a strand or mebbe the whole rope. Learnin' to dally is an art, jest like paintin' or playin' the piano. Mostly though, no matter how clever he is, a puncher loses a finger or two afore he gits on to the hang of it. A rawhide rope a-slippin' on the horn can cut off a hand neater than a sawbones with a knife. I've seen it happen a-plenty times.

"One of the best hands at dallyin' I ever seen was a wall-eyed feller who run a small outfit down near the border. It was a purty sight to see him, a-ridin' off a hillside, his hoss a-jumpin' rocks and boulders hot after some renegade brute, his *riata* a-singin' like a harp string. Just when you'd think the critter was gittin' away, *whango* would go the rawhide forty feet through the air and settle neat on the steer's horns. Afore you could say 'Looky there!' this wall-eyed feller would have the slack pulled up and two-three turns around the horn. Smoke would just boil up from where the turns was slippin' around the leather-covered pommel, but afore the critter pulled to the end, he'd be stopped.

"This here cowpoke prided hisself on not jerkin' cattle around, no matter how wild they was. That's an art too, for a hoss runnin' agin a cow-brute goin' a little faster, can tumble the beast mighty easy. You gotta know how and when to handle the rawhide for that kind of business. For one thing, a feller has to be careful his hoss don't step on the *riata* and fray a strand, causin' it to bust just when he needs it most. Sometimes the only thing holdin' a wild bull off from you and your hoss is that thin rawhide. A frayed strand can mean quick death to hoss and puncher in a spot like that. I've seen it happen, too.

"RIATAS are a heap better in the corral, too, a ropin' hosses and mares. A feller with a tied rope in a corral is in worse shape than havin' a sack-full o' bear cubs dropped on his head."

Old Jingle-Bob shifted his back against the sun-baked adobe walls of the bunkhouse, squinted across the expanse of range-land toward the distant mountains, and continued.

"I remember one time up on the Rio Puerce when a feller rode into the corral with a short hardtwist rope, tied fast, and afore anybody could stop him, he necked a big stud cold. The wreck began right there.

"The colt pulled back till the feller's saddle was up on his hoss' neck. The whole damn bunch spooked and run by the cowboy. The roped colt rim-fired another rider in the corral and jerked the first rider down, hoss and all. The rim-fired hoss bucked into the bunch of broncs and throwed his rider. Them broncs run up and down, with him a-layin' there till I thought he'd get killed for sure.

"The feller that started all the ruckus laid under his hoss knocked plumb cold. The hoss couldn't git up, for the colt was chokin' hisself down still tryin' to pull loose. 'Twas the damndest mess I ever seed!

"I run out and cut the lariat rope and that seemed to ease things up considerable. The hoss got up off his rider and the colt staggered back into the bunch of broncs. They made one last sashay up and down that pore feller's back and then run to the other end of the corral and stayed there."

"The boy was gittin' to his knees when I reached him, and I heerd him say, 'Tied rope . . . ride out. My daddy told me, but I couldn't get away in time . . .' then he keeled over.

"Come to find out, he was tryin' to say that his pappy told him always to git plumb out of the corral if a feller started ropin' with a tied rope. He'd tried to git out, but wasn't quick enough."

Jingle-Bob flipped away his cigarette butt. "That's another reason why I like this here rawhide rope. You can pitch it all away and git loose if somethin' pops up right sudden. Saves a feller many a hard fall and broken bones."

The veteran cowboy rubbed a rope-gnarled hand over a twisted, knotty knee and smiled. "Takes a feller a right smart while sometimes to learn that, though. I *know!*"

CHINESE BOOTS

BY HAL McCLURE

ONE hundred years ago, Chinese Camp in California's historic Mother Lode was the residence of thousands of Chinese

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who had drifted into the hills to get rich working in the diggings.

History records that these Chinese laborers were a frugal lot. They were avid gamblers, but they gambled among themselves at fantan and other Oriental games and kept their money circulating in their own circle. Merchants berated them for their tightfistedness. Most of their hard-earned loot went back to China—a fact which deeply pained the Americans.

One thing alone was sure; a Chinese miner, as soon as he hit the diggings, would buy himself a pair of heavy mining boots. The fit didn't matter; the new arrival bought his boots and wore them like he wore his floppy blouse—the bigger the better.

One day Chin Wo, a newcomer to the Southern Mines, walked into a general store to buy his boots. After looking over the stock for some time, the Chinese picked up one of the largest boots he could find. "How much?" he asked.

The storekeeper looked at him sourly, thinking that he hardly ever got any money from the Orientals. "Ten dollars," he grunted, doubling the price of the boots.

Chin Wo shook his pigtailed head. "Too much! I give you five dolla'."

The merchant sneered at the earnest little Chinese. "Okay, Chink. It's a deal. Five dollars."

Chin Wo paid the five dollars and started to pick up the other boot.

"Oh no, you don't, Chink!" chuckled the proprietor. "You only bought *one* boot for five dollars. The pair'll cost you *five more!*"

Chin Wo glanced from the boot in his hand to the one on the floor; then to the grinning face of the storekeeper. Suddenly, from somewhere in the depths of his voluminous blue blouse, he drew a knife.

The storekeeper jumped back in alarm, but Chin Wo merely cut the boot he had just purchased into ribbons, spoiling the pair for any other customer.

Bowing politely, he slipped the knife back into his blouse, turned on his heel and walked out.

"I Am a Man"

(Continued from page 19)

Ishi was far from stupid, although of course he had no education as we moderns view it. He had, however, a native intelligence, kindliness, dignity, and a strict sense of propriety that nothing could upset.

Because of his many years of wilderness living, where his very existence had depended upon his constant alertness, he was keenly observant. No detail, no matter how small, escaped him. This faculty demonstrated itself in his uncanny ability to imitate others.

AT his first dinner in a white man's home it would have been perfectly understandable if he had committed numerous errors. Poised and smiling, he watched what others did at the table and followed suit.

One day he was taken to an airfield where a flier was about to attempt a transcontinental flight. The plane roared into the air, and Ishi watched it dwindle in the distance. Finally he asked, "White man up there?"

When assured that there was, he laughed his guttural laugh and shook his head as though to say that white men made life an unnecessarily complicated affair.

Ishi lived several years at the University, and during that time much was learned from him about the language and customs of his people. Most questions he would answer willingly and at length, but he would not speak of those last few terrible years on Deer Creek and the death of his family.

He was always eager to tell of the customs of his tribe, always willing to demonstrate techniques of making primitive weapons and their use. The arrowheads and spear-points he painstakingly chipped are among the finest ever seen.

Years of privation and hardship in the bleak hills had left Ishi with badly weakened lungs. He received the best of medical care, but it was useless. He died on March 25, 1916, as quietly and uncomplainingly as he had lived.

In his brief five years at the University, Ishi won the affection and respect of all who knew him. With his death passed our last link with Stone Age Man. But for Ishi and his short span of years at the University, we might never have known much that is now on record of his ancient people.

He was buried with the full ceremony of his tribe as a warrior and chief. His bows and arrows were placed beside him for protection on his long journey, and there were bowls of food to sustain him until he reached the Spirit Land and was welcomed to the lodges of the Yahis.

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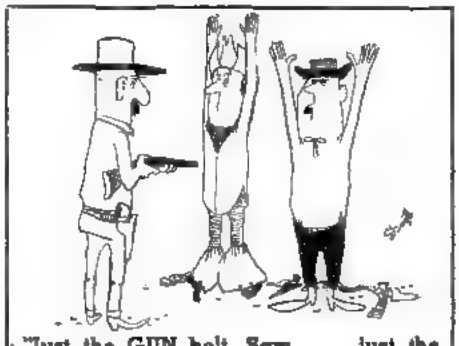
Many will NEVER be told unless you write them yourselves. You don't have to be a writer to get these stories, but you do have to know the difference between a "big windie" and a really true story.

Short and to the point is the way we like them. Of course, if the story is important enough, unusual enough, or just plain interesting enough, give it more space. If we agree with you that it deserves publication, we'll pay you 1c per word on publication. If we don't agree, we'll send the story back. Fair enough?

Let's get the really good stories from these old-timers before they all pass on. Every time one dies, a vital link with our wonderful Old West is broken, and stories that will be lost forever will die with them.



"Just the GUN belt. Sam . . . just the GUN belt!"

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Illustrated by
Al Martin Napoletano

The days of the trail drives on the Western plains are over. Yet many an old-timer still recalls the awesome sight of

LIGHTNING ON THE PLAINS

BY MAYANNE McCARLEY

HEAVENLY fireworks traced by brilliant, jagged spears of summer lightning over stormy skies are always a fearful and fascinating sight. One can view such lightning with some degree of calmness from the shelter of a doorway in a substantial dwelling, but to have been out on the vast, barren spaces of the Western plains in such a storm with five or six thousand longhorn cattle must have been akin to a night of terror, with the awful feeling of having no place to hide.

The men who drove cattle north over the old Chisholm Trail knew about it. These old-timers described lightning on the plains in unforgettable terms.

One trail driver tells of lightning coming first in "just a few bats," then hitting like fury. At first there was flash lightning; then it quickly became forked lightning, jabbing at the earth with fierce, dagger-like thrusts. As the storm intensified, chain lightning made it seem as if the whole world was aflame, and then followed what was described as "blue" lightning. But the most horrible of all forms to the men on the trail was ball lightning rolling along the ground. He describes what he calls "spark" lightning, which seemed to settle down on everything like a fog. A smell like burning sulphur polluted the air. It was almost suffocating. Phosphorescence, or foxfire, stood out in lines of dancing white fire on the long horns of the cattle and the ears of the horses. It was like a supernatural finger etching lines of light. The men, too, were outlined eerily in the weird glow, the brims of their hats seemingly on fire. The air grew so hot and heavy it was difficult to breathe. Other old-timers, describing such a night, declared they had never seen anything like it on this earth. In the words of another trail driver: "Lightning seemed to settle on the ground and creep along like something alive."

Lightning on the plains was not only terrifying to look at, it was deadly. When the big herds were moving North, it was not uncommon to lose four or five steers in one night from a herd, plus several horses out of the remuda—all struck dead by lightning.

Sometimes lightning finding nothing else to strike, would hit the earth and leave great gouged-out holes scarring the hillsides and prairies.

MEN, too, were often killed by lightning while riding the old cattle trails. It was one of the hazards of being a cowhand with the big herds. In 1882, Gus Johnson, well-known Texan and part owner of the herd he was helping to drive north across Oklahoma, was killed by lightning. It set his shirt afire, tore his hat to pieces, and melted the diamond-studded gold pin he was wearing. G. B. Withers, riding with him, lost one eye by the same stroke of lightning, but another rider nearby was uninjured.

Although it must have been a terrifying experience to be in the middle of one of these brilliant lightning and thunderstorms on the plains, the trail hands usually did not have time to think much about it, for a big herd always drifts before a storm and if a lead steer was hit by lightning or the cattle frightened by the storm, they would surely stampede. So there was little time to think of the electricity exploding in brilliant charges and the sharp, detonating crashes of thunder.

Hail, bullet like and wind-driven, was often a part of such storms. Those who watch hail rolling on the lawn as they view it from the safety of their windows can little imagine the brutal effect it has beating down on the unprotected shoulders and heads of creatures out in the storm. Men and animals suffer equally.

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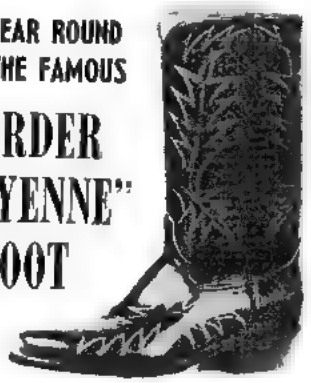

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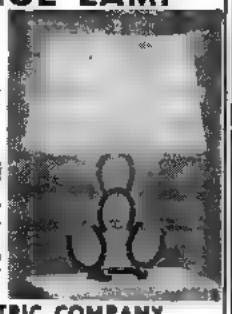

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AN old-time trail driver, telling of one hailstorm, said, "It nearly beat us to death." He described the killing of hundreds of jackrabbits, antelope, and yearlings. Sometimes the hail would be four inches on the ground. The men who were out in the hailstorm had knots and scars all over their hands and backs. Some had big blood blisters raised by the hailstones. One trailhand said, "The beat of the hail on my head made me crazy. I would have run, but didn't know which way to go."

Actually there was no place to go, unless it was under the chuckwagon. Occasionally there were trees, but trees are notoriously dangerous as shelter during a thunderstorm, as these men soon learned. Even hail was preferable to being struck by a bolt of lightning "running down" a tree.

The days of the trail drives on the Western plains are ended, but many an old-timer must recall, in nightmares perhaps, the awesome sight of milling cattle, long, pointed horns touched with weird light, and frantic men trying to hold the herd—each man partly outlined in eerie foxfire; and above all, the heaving skies aflame with fierce fingers of lightning clawing at the earth, while the sound of bawling cattle was drowned in shattering claps of thunder

Yes, the memory of lightning on the plains, when there was no place to hide, is too vivid for remembering as anything but a nightmare of sound and fury.

The Great Diamond Hoax

(Continued from page 7)

WHEN Arnold heard of this he blew his top. He went to Harpending. He was only a beer-drinking prospector, but he knew you didn't discover mines with champagne suppers. Or if you did the beer drinker would be lucky to come away with the price of a beer. Why didn't he have him draw a map to the fields and have it published in the *New York Tribune*. Call everybody in. Free diamonds for the picking.

Harpending saw the point, wired the western group and they debarked at the next way-station for whence they had come

After a hot, dusty Union Pacific ride to Rawlings Springs, the party got horses and set out into the wilds. The party was not blindfolded this time but they followed a tortuous zig-zag route with Arnold again climbing mountain peaks to get his bearings. On the third day Harpending thought he heard a train whistle. He mentioned it to Arnold. The miner said, "The railroad is at least a hundred miles away."

At four o'clock of the fourth day after plodding through some desolate country with the party beginning to get quarrelsome, Arnold stopped and said, "Here it is." They were on a plateau of about 30 or 40 acres in area, 7,000 feet above sea level. Through the middle ran a stream. The ground was covered with rocks. It was later determined that they were about twenty miles from the railroad.

The party encamped and then despite their weariness began to look for diamonds. Arnold and Slack showed no signs of nervousness. In a few minutes Rubery gave a yell. He had found the first one. Then they all got lucky. Within an hour everyone had his fists full of diamonds. Not only diamonds, they occasionally came across rubies, emeralds and sapphires. Harpending states later, "Why a few pearls weren't thrown in for good luck I have never yet been able to tell."

He further reported: "You may depend upon it that we were in a happy mood that night. There wasn't the usual row over who should cook supper, who should wash dishes, who should care for the stock, which little incidents of camp life had brought us to the verge of bloodshed during the three previous days. On the contrary, good will and benevolence were slopping over. Arnold and Slack had excellent reason to be satisfied. Mr. Janin was exultant that his name should be associated with the most momentous discovery of the age, to say nothing of the increased value of his 1,000 shares; while General Dodge, Rubery, and myself experienced the intoxication that comes with sudden accession of boundless wealth."

THE next day prospecting was resumed. Janin wanted to determine the extent of the fields. He told Harpending that the fields would certainly control the gem markets of the world, and that an essential part of such control would be to have one corporation in complete possession of the entire diamondiferous area. Arnold and Slack remained in camp while the rest of the party set up claim notices over a vast section of Wyoming

On the third day Janin was satisfied that the entire area had been claimed. Leaving Rubery and Slack to guard the claim, the rest of the party headed back to New York.

When word of the Janin report leaked out the financial world was electrified. From bucket shop to the House of Rothschild there was a wild scramble to get on the gravy train. Baron Rothschild was let on, but fortunately not the bucket shop speculator. Twenty-five of Ralston's friends were allowed to come in to the amount of two million dollars.

The "San Francisco and New York Mining and Commercial Company" was incorporated with a capital stock of ten million dollars. Its powers were broad. Not only was it to own mines and their accessories, but it was to engage in every type of commercial business pertaining to the gem industry including

"It's not my fault you sneezed!"

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the preparation of the precious stones for the market. The incorporators planned to move bodily the great lapidary industries of the Low Countries to the West Coast. The peoples of Belgium and Holland were thrown into a panic of fear.

A statement credited to Janin that twenty laborers could wash out a million dollars worth of stones a day foreshadowed the ruin of the South African economy. A tremor passed through the entire British empire.

The stock markets of the world tried to make dizzy adjustment to the news. The financial cables buzzed day and night between San Francisco, New York and London. In the meantime, the two desert-weathered prospectors were paid their $600,000 and they wandered off into the hills as artlessly as they had wandered into the Bank of California that morning when they set off their financial time-bomb.

Head offices of the company were set up in San Francisco under the direction of Billy Ralston, with a branch in New York under Harpending, and one in London under the Rothschild agency. General George B. McClellan became one of the directors. David D. Colton resigned from the Central Pacific Railway to become general manager. A huge map was hung in the head office showing the three thousand acre claim; and General Butler threw a bill into the Congressional hopper to doubly insure the right to the claim as well as to clear up all haziness as to the legal requirements of the operation envisioned.

THEN the company had to mark time to await spring thaws before operations could begin. Forty years later Asbury Harpending still shuddered at the thought of the catastrophe that was narrowly missed that following month. Pressure began to mount on all sides for shares of stock. He recalled:

"Just what might have happened in a single month of wild speculation had the stock of the San Francisco and New York Mining and Commercial Company been placed in any considerable quantity on the market is hard to tell. But one thing is very certain—it would have caused a catastrophe almost without parallel in the civilized world. The public was keyed up to a point of a speculative craze such as even the Comstock never saw, not alone in San Francisco but in nearly every financial center of the earth. Millions upon millions would have been invested. The shares would have soared to fabulous figures. Banks would have advanced money on these prime securities, as was the custom in those times. And then the awful crash. There would have been more ruins in financialdom than San Francisco exhibited after the fire. Every day the mails were loaded with letters from eager correspondents making inquiries for stock. The best and unanswerable proof that everyone connected with the company acted in good faith is to be found in the fact that not a share changed hands."

The company had decided that it would work only one pocket and let out other areas on a cash and royalty basis. Some twenty bona fide offers were received by the company during that month. Fortunately none were closed. For these marginal companies could have sold stock on the basis of their concessions and thus opened the speculative flood gates.

In fact, three other independent diamond companies were formed waiting

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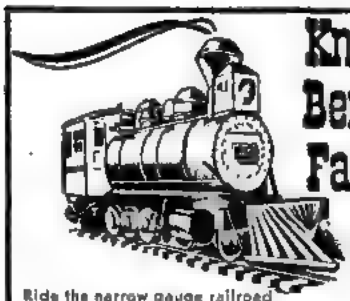

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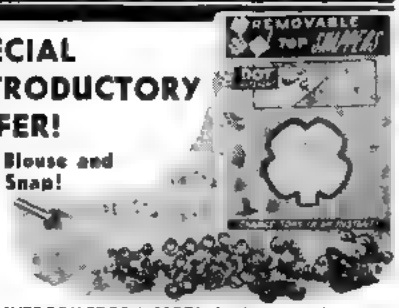

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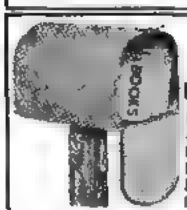

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only for the Ralston outfit to open up its stock so as to unload their stock on the speculative upsweep. But the men around Ralston were not speculating. They had their hands on the greatest discovery on earth and they were sitting tight.

Then one month after the San Francisco and New York Mining and Commercial Company had set up sumptious shop, Ralston picked a telegram from his desk. It was marked from Rawlings Springs, Wyoming. He read it. And then he read it again. He paled. But he was a man reared in the broad humor of the West. Then he laughed, long and heartily. That laugh came back to him from around the world.

IT seemed that a young government geologist named Clarence King was making a periodic trip through the western territory. He decided to look in on the great diamond find. In company with an old German prospector he had little difficulty in locating the fields. And less difficulty in locating diamonds. The area was spotted with ant hills. These industrious little workers had become enamoured with the bright stones and had carried them into their holes. In practically every hill they found a diamond. In fact, some of the hills were made of diamond dust. The helpful little insects were not only digging them up but they were processing them also.

Clarence King looked at his partner. The old prospector looked at King. In his hand was a diamond clearly marked by a lapidary's tool. "This is the greatest field ever," roared the German. "It not only produces diamonds, it cuts them yet!"

The geologist took horse to Rawlings Springs and sent the telegram that broke the diamond bubble. A party, including the discomfitted Janin, immediately set out for the fields. But that was antic-climactic. Ralston began to write out checks even before the party got on the train. He knew the swashbuckling mining game of the Old West. He had been outsmarted by two harmless-appearing desert rats who knew how to clam up. He had seen the fortunes of men go up and down too many times in that game to lose any of his bounce. He took the rap in full. Out of his own pocket he paid off everyone who had put money in the project and joined in the laugh that went out over the Sierras.

The debate raged for years in mining and financial circles as to how so many experts could have been fooled at so many different points. And it is quite obvious that they were fooled. No one made any money on the deal—except, of course, the two prospectors who until now had been lost in the shuffle. Had the stock been put on the open market with a resultant financial crash the whole operation would have been suspect. The only answer seems to be that anyone can be wrong once, and that by coincidence all the experts had their one time for being wrong at the same time. Add to this the intoxication of the era and the place in which the events occurred.

The subsequent examination of the field revealed some very clever "salting" and also some crudities. Narrow holes were made with a sharp instrument into which the diamonds were placed. The holes were carefully covered and then allowed to weather during the rough winter months. Possibly some of the diamonds are still there. But lest another hoax get started it might be well to warn the diamond-seeker that they are of a very poor grade—Tiffany's lapidary to the contrary notwithstanding. Investigators finally pieced out the story.

A picture of Arnold was recognized by the diamond merchants of Amsterdam. They remembered him as an American who made several trips over there to buy great quantities of inferior grade diamonds. This fact alone gave them cause for recalling him. They passed him off as a rich American who had more money than taste. It was also determined that he had made $50,000 in a gold mining deal which would have given him the money to buy the diamonds.

The Tiffany appraisal can be partly explained by two facts. The prospector undoubtedly bought some expensive stones to be used as samples. And Tiffany was not a house that dealt in uncut stones. There was probably no expert in that field in the country. Why King found a cut stone while Janin, after three days of search did not, is anybody's guess.

The prospectors just had an unaccountable amount of luck along with their grumpy silence. Many crudities were revealed after the fields were thoroughly explored. Rubies and diamonds were found pressed into rock crevices. These gems are not found together, and why no one thought of that sooner is another one of the mysteries of the hoax. Harpending denied a howling story, however—that they found diamonds perched in the crotches of trees. There were no trees in the area.

The laconic Slack simply disappeared. No one could find out where he had come from nor where he had gone. Arnold was traced to Kentucky where he had set himself up on a fine estate in Harlan County. A California contingent went down to Kentucky to file suit for recovery of his $300,000. They were met at the county line by Arnold's neighbors armed with shot guns. He was their hero. He had taken the smart-money boys. They warned that Harlan County was very unhealthy for Californians. The Californians went back home.

Billy Ralston took all of his cancelled diamond hoax checks, had them framed and hung in his office. A reminder, should any more bewildered wanderers of the wasteland stumble into his marble foyer carrying buckskin sacks.

"Rides shotgun for Wells Fargo!"

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Outsmarted by a Coyote

(Continued from page 21)

nose and a rat tail—the ugliest thing I ever looked at. His mouth was big enough to swallow a coyote at one bite, so I made friends with him and took him along.

We covered that country complete and the crooked footprints were everywhere, but no coyote. I suppose he was watching me from the brush and thinking what a sap I was.

One clear morning I was sitting on top of a hill with my field glasses and spotted him. He was in some tall grass and looking straight at me. Between us was quite a sizable piece of country with no brush to speak of and very little cover behind him.

I took the dog around to where I could jump out from behind a hill. He had moved to some thin brush not over a hundred yards away. It was a poor chance but I peeled out the .30-30, got the dog close to me and cut loose. It must have been close because the coyote jumped straight up in the air and Bruno saw him.

That lumbering mutt went out of there like a streak and was a third of the way across when Crooked Foot saw him. I jumped on my horse and followed. There was an open place five or six hundred feet across and the dog gained over half of the distance. They were really cutting the dust, and if that foot bothered the coyote I couldn't see it. He was getting along like a flying saucer, belly close to the ground, tail straight out. They went through one little patch of brush then to a clearing again.

Bruno would hump and stretch with every leap. He acted like he was controlled by springs and all the ugliness was gone. He was really beautiful in that chase and he'll never be ugly to me again. There was only a yard between them when they hit the next brush. It was thick and the dog was too smart to run in it. He came back to me looking sort of apologetic because he lost the race. I could see then that a running dog didn't have a chance where the brush was so thick and the runs so short.

The very next day, when I didn't have the dog, I saw the coyote right out in the open eating on a sheep. I rode into a draw out of sight and quit my horse. I crawled to within a hundred yards or so but the brush was too high. Every time I tried to get a bead on him there was a twig in the way.

BEYOND the patch of brush concealing me was a deep little dry wash. Slowly I crawled to it. The wind was to me, and Crooked Foot didn't get my scent. He crouched there over his kill, grabbing bites and looking all around. The range couldn't have been more than sixty yards from the wash.

I eased up onto a rock, put one foot out for a brace and started to raise my rifle. The rock rolled from beneath my foot with a noise that sounded as loud as a clap of thunder to me. The coyote vanished as though by a magician's trick.

I damn near cried, I was that disappointed. What I need, I thought bitterly to myself, is one of those high-velocity, flat-trajectory rifles with a telescope sight. A rifle that will reach 'way out yonder, follow that dadburned coyote around till it finds him, and then kick hell out of him!

I put my horse into a lope and headed

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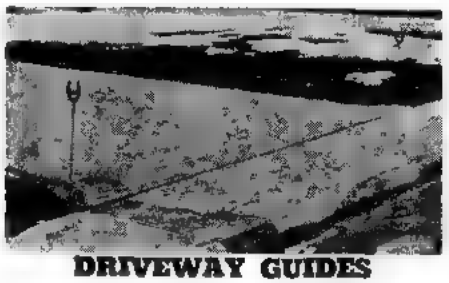

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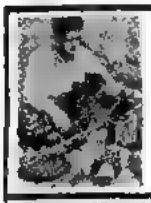

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for town. I shopped up and down Main Street for the longest range gun in the sporting goods stores. I finally ran into a .270, but it didn't have a scope. A gunsmith changed that *muy pronto*. Loaded with five boxes of shells, I hit for the hills again.

Four boxes of shells later, I thought I was pretty good up to 500 yards. I rode the ridges and draws for days, looking for coyotes and putting traps in likely places. No dice. Tracks were all I could see.

After another month and down to my last half-box of shells, I discovered by the tracks that Crooked Foot had picked up a partner. A few coyotes had come back into the territory after the big cleanup and I snagged a couple, including Crooked Foot's pal. Things were looking up.

Later we got a light snow and I started out on the trapline. I collected one skunk, one coyote, and a dried-up little bobcat but no Crooked Foot.

I rode along until well after noon. On the far side of a wide clear space I thought I saw something move. I got out my glasses and looked . . . Crooked Foot! I dismounted for a better look.

HE was lying on his belly, front feet out, head up. While I watched he stood up, took a few steps and sat down on his haunches facing me. He was so damn deliberate and cocky I knew it was the old cuss himself.

Now I'd see if I could hit a coyote at close to 400 yards. I pulled out the .270, lay down on my belly, rested the rifle across a rock and got him in my sights. His breast was toward me; a little lighter colored than the rest of him. The sun spotlighted him for me; the prettiest target I ever saw!

I knew that even a .270 wouldn't shoot flat that far, so I centered as near as I could on his nose. I figured that, even if the bullet should drop, if I could keep the line I'd make some kind of a hit.

I took plenty of time aiming, held solid and squeezed off the slug. I felt the jolt of the recoil and shut my eyes. Suddenly I felt foolish. Trying to score a center shot at that distance—hell, it couldn't be done!

Then I remembered that there hadn't been a bit of wind. Maybe I *had* hit him. I jumped up and looked. He was moving wobbly-like—and then, suddenly, he went down.

I hopped on my horse and rode hell-for-leather. Seemed like twenty years before I got to him. He lay still; if he wasn't dead, he was too sick to get up. I swung out of the saddle and looked—but I didn't see the crooked foot. Right then I felt sick myself!

I rolled him over—and that crooked foot jumped out at me like a striking rattlesnake. I couldn't see anything else but that crooked foot; it looked as big as a boot. I yelled, I cried, I lay down in the snow and rolled. The long, nerve-racking hunt was over, the job done. Crooked Foot wasn't a ghost, he was just another coyote—but a mighty smart one. I had gone a long way to get him and I wasn't sorry for all the time I'd spent. He'd made a big dent in my reputation as a trapper, but getting him leveled that off.

I don't suppose I'll ever meet up with another wild animal to equal Crooked Foot for smartness and savvy. You know, in a way I'm sorry I killed him. Somehow, over the long hunt, I got to liking the poor cuss.

King of the Keelboatmen

(Continued from page 17)

and young Carpenter joined the expedition as trappers and hunters. The records of the expedition show that another young fellow destined to be a famous figure in Western history signed for the trip—Jim Bridger. Grizzled old Hugh Glass, who was to survive a tussle with maddened she-bear on the journey, Broken Hand Tom Fitzpatrick, and Jed Smith were other stalwarts in Major Henry's company

On April 15, two large keels set off on the memorable trip.

Unlike the Ohio and the Mississippi, the Missouri was new to Mike. Currents were treacherous and shifty, hiding the whole trunk of a tree one minute, then slapping it wickedly against the bow of a boat the next. Shifting sandbars made navigation hazardous. Everybody on board took turns on the *cordelle;* even Mike had no time to get drunk or cut didoes on this trip.

Moving up the "Big Muddy," the expedition met French trappers going downstream in long canoes loaded with fur pelts to be sold in St. Louis. On the banks they frequently saw Indians, shaking bows and war-clubs and whooping shrilly. Often an arrow came slanting out toward the boats, but the range was too great and nobody was hit.

At Fort Osage, the leaders of the party went ashore to pay a social call and exchange the news. The traders warned them that all the tribes along the Missouri were "pizen" mean and increasingly restless.

The news made Major Henry anxious to get located for the winter trapping operations as soon as possible, particularly as he had lost one of his boats in a collision with a snag just before reaching the fort. Crowded aboard the one boat, the adventurers moved on.

AT the mouth of the Yellowstone River, Henry decided to headquarter. On a tongue of land between the Yellowstone and the Missouri, in a spot ideally located for defense, a group of log cabins was surrounded by a stout stockade. The Major named the place Fort Henry.

Preparations for winter trapping were brisk and business-like, with the trappers assigned in pairs to certain areas. Mike and Carpenter were "skin trappers" as distinguished from hired trappers; each being paid for pelts brought in instead of wages. Both men, being "independent as hogs on ice," preferred that arrangement.

Trapping was old stuff to Mike, but brand-new to Carpenter. Quickly, under the older man's careful teaching, Carpenter became as expert as his "adopted" father. He sought to emulate everything his idol did, even to drinking and brawl-

"Lucy, we've got to buy that kid some toys!"

ing at the fort tavern. One way of proving their comradeship and mutual trust was a spectacular stunt that involved shooting a cup of whiskey from each other's head.

Mike and Carpenter had many admirers at Fort Henry, but there were those who did not approve of their boisterous ways nor of the wild manner in which Carpenter was developing under Fink's tutelage. The bolder spirits among the latter faction openly criticized Mike, and Mike retaliated by challenging them to rough-and-tumble combat.

Tension grew within the fort. Mike was drinking heavily now, and growing more morose and unstable after each bout with the bottle. In one of his infrequent sober moments, Mike decided to leave the stockade and hole up in a cave on the Yellowstone. Carpenter, ignoring the advice of well-wishers, went with him. Shortly after, rumors were heard in the tavern that Carpenter had quarreled with Mike and was about to break the partnership and return to the fort. A sense of impending tragedy hung heavy in the air.

Yet, a few days later, both men were back drinking together at the tavern. "We're jes' as good friends as ever!" crowed Mike—and added belligerently. "And if any of you bastards don't believe it, speak up!" Nobody spoke.

As the evening wore on, Mike suggested that they prove their renewed comradeship with the old stunt of shooting at the whiskey cups. Carpenter enthusiastically agreed, and Mike placed a cup on his head. Carpenter, unsteady from too much whiskey, braced himself and fired. The cup went flying as the crowd roared, but the bullet nicked Mike's scalp, drawing blood.

Mike stood glowering at Carpenter, but didn't say a word. In turn, the young man took his position with the brimming cup atop his head. Mike lifted his rifle, aimed—then suddenly lowered the heavy Hawken. "Come on, Mike, what the hell's the matter with you?" yelled Carpenter impatiently

Mike shook his head as if to clear the whiskey fumes from his befuddled brain. He raised his rifle again, fired—and Carpenter fell with a hole in the center of his forehead.

The shocked crowd was silent as the killer stumbled out the door.

WHETHER deliberate murder or cruel accident, Mike Fink paid for his terrible act. Sadly he mumbled to anybody who would listen that Carpenter was like a son to him, and that the shooting was an accident. It wasn't often that he could get anybody to listen to his remorseful ravings, for the trappers avoided him as a crafty, lying murderer.

Finally Talbott, the big gunsmith, got up the nerve to publicly denounce Mike as a foul murderer. Mike, feeling compelled to prove his innocence to Talbott, went to his shop. As his haggard figure appeared in the doorway, Talbott snatched up a heavy pistol and shouted to Mike not to enter.

Tearfully pleading his innocence, Mike moved toward the gunsmith. The pistol roared, and a bloody Mike Fink fell to the floor.

Talbott knelt at Mike's side. With awful effort the dying man gasped, "I-I wanted you to know that I didn't mean to kill my boy. I swear to God that I didn't mean . . . "

Blood clogged in Mike's throat. His head dropped to one side; the King of the Keelboatmen was dead.

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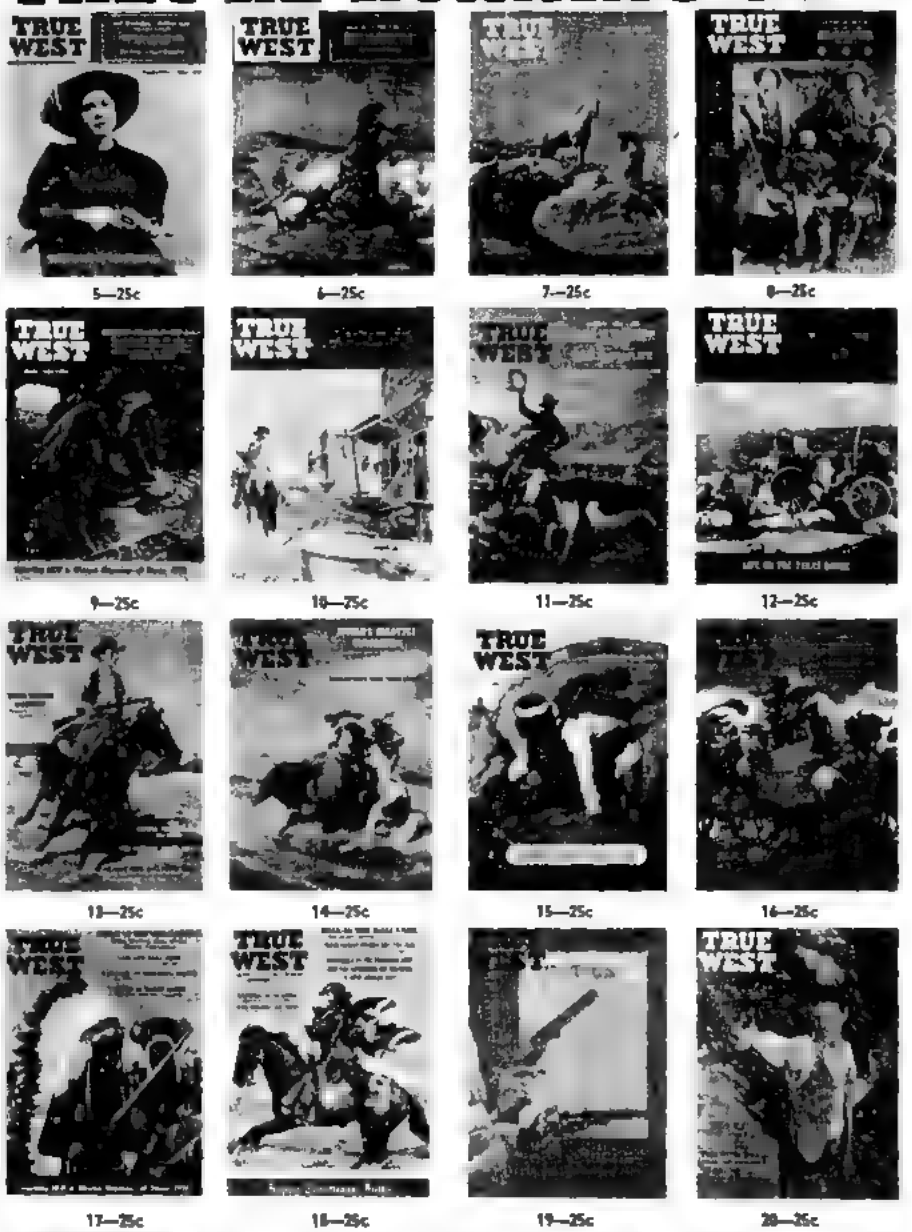
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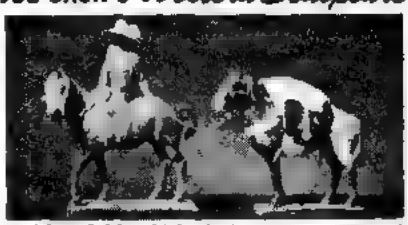

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Seven Cities of Sin and Silver

(Continued from page 12)

tion; a sullen, waterless world, where scarcely one sprig of green is visible. Spotted over the marsh are mountainous heaps of dead white borax, a few old reduction tanks, and occasional pieces of mining and freighting equipment. All wooden parts have been eaten to a porous sponge by the strong mineral, and even iron shows the erosive effect of its gnawing.

Near the Callahan home stands the caving walls of "Colonel" Young's big quartz mill. Spattered over the adjacent flat are the ruins of many old buildings, and on the barren slope back of town lies the cemetery. General desolation of the old burying ground is emphasized by many open graves from which the mouldering bones of Chinese dead were exhumed long ago for removal to their ancestral homes. Of the three-hundred-odd burials the graveyard is supposed to contain, only one marker in the cemetery carried a name which, in 1950, might still be deciphered. That name was Benjamin Rowe.

All pertinent details—who he was, when and where he was born, and how and when he died—had been sandblasted away by the decades of the borax-laden wind. And now, even this name is no longer decipherable.

Even more anonymous are the sleeping dead of nearby Belleville and Marietta.

Each of these towns had its own cemetery; both plots still being indicated by fallen palings and the usual external evidence of graveyards. But not a marker was standing in either place in 1955; nor was any inscription completely legible. One wooden headboard at Belleville still bore a few isolated phrases, but not a single word could be deciphered on any marker at old Marietta.

"Once I figgered to fence the graveyard," said the grizzled Mark Obert, one of the last three inhabitants of Marietta. "When I learned what th' job would cost, I said t' myself: 'Hell's bells! Them that's in there can't get out . . . and them that's out don't want to get in. So what's th' need of a fence?'"

BELLEVILLE, which came into being in 1873 when the Northern Belle mill was built at that point, soon enjoyed a reputation as one of the best sporting camps in Nevada.

During its career of nine hectic years the town had two newspapers, both owned by Ramon Montenegro, a gambler, who also owned and operated the Club House, Belleville's leading palace of pleasure.

One of the celebrated gun battles of the town was a street duel engaged in by this same prominent citizen, and Judge A. G. Turner. Assertedly due to pointed remarks made by Montenegro in one of his papers, bad blood had existed between the two men for some time. One day when they met on the main street of town, the guns of both began blazing in the approved style of a Grade-B Western. The fusilade ended when Montenegro went down with two slugs in his belly, and Judge Turner was hauled off to Candelaria for trial. No charges being filed, he soon was released.

Considerable comment also was aroused by the murder of Tom McLaughlin, characterized by the Candelaria *True Fissure* as "pleasant and genial in disposition and the very embodiment of a gentleman." These genteel attributes had not prevented Tom from making a few footprints in the sands of Marietta when he killed two men and wounded a third—all allegedly members of the Brophy gang. Later, as Tom rode his horse through the streets of Belleville, he was shot from ambush by an unknown assailant. The slaying was set down as a matter of revenge, and no one was held to answer.

The former hardware store at Candelaria, Nevada, is still fitted with tall iron doors that were a holdover from the days of threatened Indian attack.

With a second twenty-stamp mill built at Belleville in 1876, the town continued active throughout that decade, with a brace of hotels, seven saloons, and numerous stores and cafes. But her death warrant was signed with the arrival of piped water at Candelaria in the early Eighties.

With the resulting transferral of milling activities to points closer the miners, Belleville folded—quietly and unequivocally.

All that remains to mark her transient presence are the foundation and broken walls of the big mill, the remnants of a few stone cabins, and her nameless graves. Her neighboring hotspot of Marietta has vanished almost as completely.

AND now for a quick leap backward to another of the Somnolent Seven. Midway between Columbus and Candelaria—in a long, deep canyon between the Mount Diablo and the Metallic and Emperor shafts—is all that remains of the old settlement of Metallic City; or, as she was derisively known to her contemporaries, Pickhandle Gulch.

The Gulch was not famed as an exponent of law and order; even her nickname alluded to the fact that her citizens customarily settled their differences with flailing pickhandles. From visible evidence remaining, her most plentiful building materials would seem to have been native stone and wooden whiskey cases. One of the best preserved cabins, still standing in the canyon in 1950, was constructed of such cases filled with earth, relidded, and laid brick fashion. Stenciled end-boards revealed that each of the cases originally had held one dozen quarts, and most of the boxes carried the additional legend:

"Bottled from 1874 Whiskies.
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Despite its isolated position on what might be termed the shirttail of civilization, Pickhandle Gulch was not wholly ignored by persons of importance; one frequent visitor at The Gulch being "Lucky" Baldwin, millionaire mine promoter, who was financially interested in several properties in the district. Other big shots who lent their occasional presence included the millionaire Comstocker, Col. James G. Fair.

During his campaign for United States Senator from Nevada in 1880, Colonel

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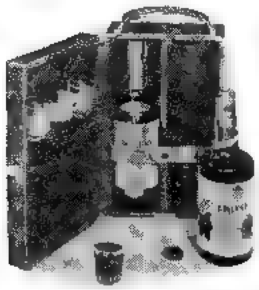

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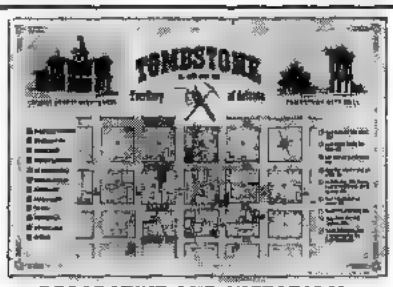

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Fair—in red-flannel shirt and wide-brimmed hat—came clattering up the canyon in a dusty buckboard to address Pickhandle's electors. After buying drinks for the town and visiting each of the district's several rich mines, the Colonel trundled back down the mountain, leaving The Gulch unalterably convinced that here was a man's man who talked a man's language.

Among the red-letter days of Pickhandle Gulch, this memorable visit was topped only by the day that Shagnasty Joe left town.

Shagnasty, a frequenter of the Roaring Gimlet saloon in Candelaria, was generally known as a loud-mouthed four-flusher. Pickhandle's Number One bad boy, on the other hand, was Blue Dick Hartman, a drifter from the Comstock whose face had been permanently discolored by powder burns. The inter-city jealousy between Dick and Shagnasty had created a situation that threatened any moment to break into hot lead.

Word went around one day that Blue Dick had been killed by an unknown assailant and was laid out in McKissick's Saloon on the south side of the plaza. The news spread rapidly, and soon as the second mine shift came off, Pickhandle convened to pay homage to her departed townsman.

As the delegation filed into McKissick's, every eye was drawn irresistibly to the canvas-covered figure reposing on a billiard table in a darkened rear corner. From the lower end of that impromptu shroud protruded Dick's boots, and beside him on the green baize lay his familiar slouch hat.

Regardless of how big a nuisance Blue Dick's presence had been in the past, his absence immediately had the effect of skyrocketing his questionable value to mankind.

"He was a great guy," sighed the shift boss from the Emperor. "A great friend to all of us!"

"That he was!" agreed another from the Mount Diablo. "A g-r-reat force for law and order!"

Hesitantly drawing aside the canvas covering, one of the miners peered into Dick's mean blue face. As he gazed upon his fellow Gulcher, one of those blued eyelids was stirred by the faintest trace of a wink, and before he replaced the canvas shroud a flicker of understanding had crept into the mourner's brain.

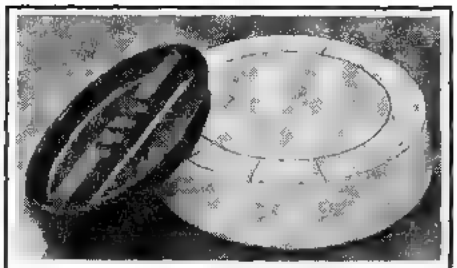
"Yessir!" he remarked dolefully, tossing off another slug. "Dick was a gr-r-reat asset to Nevada, a great name in the West. I figger it's up to us to see he's planted in handsome style. How 'bout it, boys—let's give Ol' Dick a gen-u-wine send-off!"

The idea met with instant approval, and as Dick's hat was circulated, there poured into it a cascade of silver and gold coins. With each subsequent round of drinks, Dick's loss became the greater, and more coins clanked into the kitty.

The wake was warming up nicely when the swing doors of McKissick's were darkened by the hulking figure of Shagnasty Joe. Elbowing his way to the bar, he let out a beller and pounded for service.

"Now, Joe!" reproved the barkeep. "Is that any proper way to act with poor Blue Dick lying dead and cold on th' table yonder? Ain't you ashamed of yourself?"

"Dead!" exploded Shagnasty Joe of Candelaria. "That lousy skunk? So



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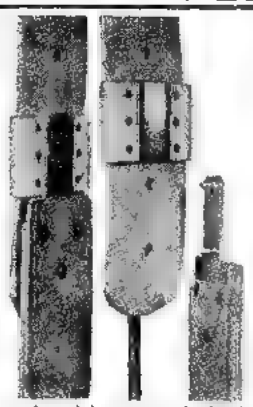

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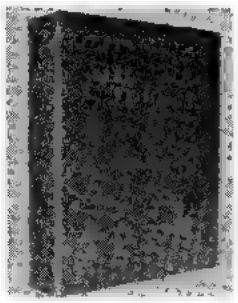

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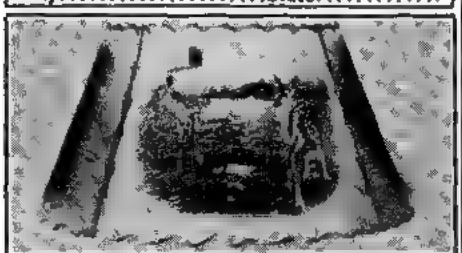

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somebody beat me to it and plugged him! He may have had you banties buffaloed, but not me! He weren't no gunman! He was nothin' but a lousy coyote—look at him cross-eyed and he'd run off yelpin' with his tail atween his laigs!"

Shagnasty's incriminations might have become downright insulting if they had not terminated in a hoarse, long-drawn shriek.

The "corpse" of Blue Dick had leaped from the table and both arms were flailing wildly in an effort to throw off the enveloping "shroud" so he might draw his forty-five. Just as Shagnasty cleared the swinging doors, with stark terror lending wings to his boots, Dick got his gun unlimbered and began heating the pants of the departing figure.

Soon outdistanced in his pursuit, Blue Dick returned to McKissick's. There he and his erstwhile mourners dedicated themselves to the business of converting the funeral expense fund into liquid assets.

And that was the last Pickhandle Gulch ever saw of Shagnasty Joe.

Some Shooting!

(Continued from page 13)

our pistols and he stopped. It was then agreed to stop the fight for a time, so the Mexicans went back to their herd. We were not fixed for that fight but wanted to be for the coming one. This was the real reason we made a truce for the time. Jim and I went straight to camp and loaded two of the best pistols there. While we were doing this a message came from the Mexicans that time was up and they were coming. We, of course, sent the messenger back and told the Mexicans to keep off our herd and not to come around; that we did not want any more trouble.

"Seven of them gathered on the west side of the herd and seemed to talk matters over. Presently, the boss, Hosea, my old foe, with three men came around to the east side where we were. I had changed horses, so I rode to meet him. He fired at me when about seventy-five yards away, but missed me. I concluded to charge him and turned my horse loose at him, firing as I rode. The first ball did the work. I shot him through the heart and he fell over the horn of his saddle, pistol in hand and one in the scabbard, the blood pouring from his mouth. In an instant I had his horse by the reins, and Jim Clements had relieved him of his pistols and Hosea fell dead to the ground.

"The other Mexicans kept shooting at us, but did not charge. They were in two parties, one about seventy-five yards to the south; the other about 150 yards to the west. We charged the first party and held our fire until we got close to them. They never weakened, but kept shooting at us all the time. When we got right on them and opened up they turned their horses, but we were right in the middle of them, dosing them with lead. They wheeled and made a brave stand. We were too quick for them, however, in every way and they could not go our gait. A few more bullets quickly and rightly silenced the party forever.

"The other party was advancing on us and shooting as they came. We, therefore, determined to stampede the herd, which we did in short order by shooting a steer in the nose. This seemed to demoralize them for a while and they broke to the battle, except one, who stood still and continued to use his pistol. We cross-fired on him, and I ended his existence by putting a ball through his temples. We then took after the rest, who now appeared to be hunting protection from other herders. We caught up with two of them, and Jim Clements covered and held them while I rounded up two more. These latter two said they had nothing to do with the fight and that their companions must have been drunk. We let these two go to the cattle.

"A crowd of cowmen from all around had now gathered. I suppose there were twenty-five of them around the two Mexicans we had first rounded up. We thus had good interpreters and once we thought the matter was settled with them . . . Suddenly the Mexicans, believing they had the drop, pulled their pistols and both fired point-blank at me. I don't know how they missed. In an instant I fired at one, then at the other. The first I shot through the heart and he dropped dead. The second I shot through the lungs and Jim shot him, too. He fell off his horse and I was going to shoot him again when he begged and held up both hands. I could not shoot a man, not even a treacherous Mexican, begging and down. Besides, I knew he would die anyway.

"In comparing notes after the fight, we agreed that I had killed five out of six dead Mexicans."

WES HARDIN'S dry, factual account of this bloody affair on Newton Prairie in 1871 sharply points up the fact that—writers of Western fiction and Hardin *aficionados* notwithstanding—the old-time gunfighters and the old-time six-shooters were far from infallible. Hardin himself did deadly execution, but he burned a lot of powder in the doing. Yet he survived largely because of the incredibly poor marksmanship of his opponents rather than because of the superior quality of his own. One wonders just how much other famed gunslingers of the Old West owed their fearsome reputations to newspaper reporters and dime novelists. It is an interesting and challenging thought to any serious student of Western Americana.

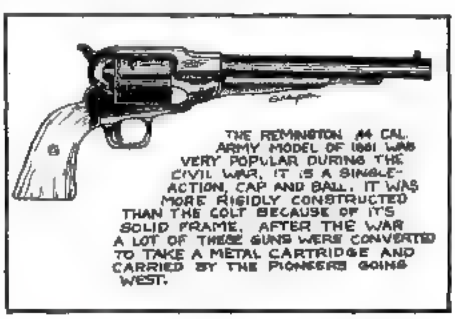
Coming Up!

(Continued from page 2)

five years ago, had this to say to inquisitive folks who asked him where he came from: "I come from a tough country. Came down the creek a-riding a grizzly bear with a cactus saddle, packing a bobcat under each arm and using a rattlesnake for a quirt. But the tough guys ran me out!" Which gives you a pretty fair idea of what to look for in "A Cactus Saddle," as told by Lee himself to H. Crosby Badgett.

More delightful sketches in text and drawings from the Gipson-Leftwich book THE COW KILLERS, "Wild Old Days," and Truly Western top off a varied and colorful issue.

See you later, Podner. . . .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WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP

By The Old Bookaroos

RANGE LIFE

LUCKY 7 (University of Texas Press, $3.75) by Will Tom Carpenter, an autobiography of a Texas trail driver and rancher, is a fine new item for collectors of books on the cattle trade.

By chance, this rare old manuscript was brought to the attention of Professor Elton Miles, of Sul Ross College, Alpine, Texas, who edited the book and has provided an introduction and notes that add exceedingly to the information about the author.

It was a notable adventure to have made one trip up the cattle trail but Carpenter outdid most cowboys by driving herds over the famous trails of Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, Montana, and Arizona. The author, like Will Rogers, was short on grammar but long on briny verbs and adjectives that add spice to the details of an amazing career.

THE GILES CHRONICLE (Clarendon Press, $3) by Virginia Rogers is the simply told story of the 60 years of a cattle shipping point in the Texas Panhandle. The little community grew up around the railroad stock pens built in 1888, and was a thriving little business center serving the numerous ranches in Donley and nearby counties. The Post Office was discontinued in 1951 and only a few ranch families now call Giles "home." There is a good chapter on "Ranchers and Cowboys" and numerous photographs. A worthwhile record.

SHEEP (University of Minnesota Press, $4) by Archer B. Gilfillan is one of the truly fine books about the west which was out of print far too long.

SHEEP is an immensely entertaining and challenging book, full of sharp and humorous satire. For generations, the sheepherder has been the butt of varied jests of cowboys and the general public. As one man against an army, Archie lances back at the jesters and beats them at their own game.

Underneath the crust of satire and innuendo lies a deeply penetrating story of sheep ranching that few know about and understand.

This reviewer was a personal friend of Archie's for many years and until I knew him well, it seemed incredible that a Phi Beta Kappa and a man educated for the Ministry could become a South Dakota homesteader and a sheepherder. But Archie was a lonely, kindly man, basically a poet and a philosopher whose yearning to strike out on his legs led him into activities completely foreign to his upbringing. He was a stormy defender of the downtrodden, regardless of species, and his rapier stabs in defense of the lowly sheepherder in this book is only one example of his personal war against unfairness as he understood it.

MODERN RANCHING

FLAT TOP RANCH: The Story of a Grassland Venture (University of Oklahoma Press, $4) is an amazing book. There have been ranch histories before but none like this. This is the story of the creation of a ranch.

Charles Pettit bought the original Flat Top Ranch in Bosque County, Texas, in 1938, its seven thousand acres so badly overgrazed the previous lessee had moved off to keep his cattle from starving. To this nucleus, Pettit added another ten thousand acres by buying the adjoining farms which were in even worse condition: their top soil washed away, their fertility gone, the streams dried up, and their once lush grasslands reduced to weeds or infested with brush.

The story of how these lands were restored to their former productivity makes fascinating reading. Most of the brush is gone and luxuriant stands of native grasses now clothe the hillsides. The streams are flowing again, fishing is good, and bob-white and deer hunting add substantially to the annual income from the white-faced cattle. The details of how each of these tasks was accomplished is told by a number of outstanding conservationists and by the ranch staff. The late Louis Bromfield wrote the opening chapters and William R. Van Dersal tells the wildlife story. Old Bookaroos B. W. Allred and J. C. Dykes edited the book and each contributed a chapter. This is a stimulating book for all present and prospective ranch owners and conservationists.—Fred Renner, the Oldest Bookaroo.

LAW AND ORDER

Glenn Shirley's LAW WEST OF FORT SMITH (Holt, $5) is the carefully documented history of frontier justice in the U. S. District Court at Fort Smith, Arkansas, during the period 1834-1896. Indian Territory was a part of the jurisdiction of the U.S. Court for the Western District of Arkansas and provided most of the grist for the mill of justice that ground away at Fort Smith. Judge Isaac Charles Parker who earned the nickname of "Hanging Parker" and the respect of the lawless, came to the bench at Fort Smith in 1875. During the administration he sentenced 160 men to die and 79 of them were acutally hanged.

Author Shirley, a Police Captain at Stillwater, Oklahoma has written an entertaining book on the attempts of Judge Parker and his marshals to bring law and order to a vast wild country that harbored the outlaws from a dozen States. There are some good photographs, fine appendices and an adequate index.

X. BEIDLER: VIGILANTE (University of Oklahoma Press, $2) by Helen Fitzgerald Sanders and William H. Bertsche, Jr. is the latest item in The Western Frontier Library to reach the public interested in the West's lawmen and outlaws.

By inclination, Beidler was destined to serve on the side of law and order in Montana in the 1860's where those that sponsored justice were in a minority and incredible banditry raged unchecked too long.

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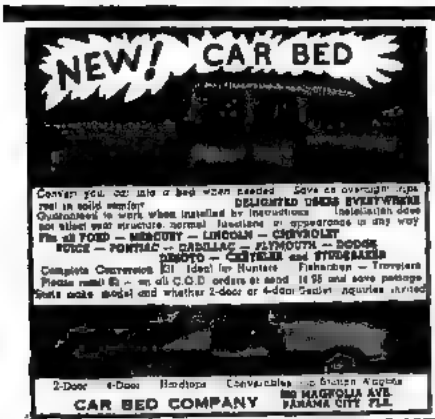

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taken from dictation and from contemporary newspaper interviews as supplemented with facts supplied by people who knew about him and his numerous experiences

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FEUDIN' AND FIGHTIN'

G. B. Ray's MURDER AT THE CORNERS (Naylor, $3) is a vivid account of reconstruction days in North Texas. Captain Bob Lee of Forest's Confederate Cavalry came home to find his home country full of Jay-Hawkers and Red-Legs from Kansas and Missouri. The feud that followed was bloody since the Union Leaguers had the full support of the reconstruction administration of Texas. This is a bit of history that needed recording and the author has done a good job of it. There are also photographs of most of the major participants.

THE GUNNISON TRAGEDY

THE LAND BETWEEN (Westernlore, $6) by James Schiel, is a translation by Frederick W. Bachman and William Swilling Wallace in a handsome format.

Schiel, a German, was the doctor and geologist on the ill-fated Gunnison and Beckwith Survey of the Central Rocky Mts. of 1853-1854.

The towns of Gunnison, Colorado, and Gunnison, Utah, were named for Captain John W. Gunnison, the party leader. The explorers passed through the sites where these towns later sprung up.

Schiel gives a clarifying account of how Gunnison and a small detail of men were murdered near Sevier Lake in Utah by Indians. Only two members of the group with Gunnison escaped to give Schiel and the others the grim account of the killings.

Schiel was poorly impressed with the Mormons and their primitive Salt Lake Valley communities. He would be surprised today to see how sadly he misjudged the hidden energy and potential of these hungry struggling pioneers. This item will become scarce; only 500 copies were printed.

LITERARY TEXAS

TEXAS TREASURE CHEST (Naylor, $5) is a collection of literary gems properly assembled into chapters by Boyce House. J. Frank Dobie, John C. Duval, Don Biggers, J. Marvin Hunter, and Sam Houston are among the Texas writers quoted. There are chapters on "Cattlemen and Cowboys," "Longhorns, Horses, and Other Animals," "Rangeland Rhymes," "Gun-Fighters" and "Gushing Gold" among the 14 that make up the book. And, of course, Boyce managed to include a notable cast of characters including Big Foot Wallace, Sam Bass, John Selman, John Wesley Hardin, James B. Gillett, Capt. Bill McDonald, and "Fighting Jack" Potter. This is a fine job and particularly distinguished for the choice selections from the files of many of the smaller Texas newspapers.

INDIAN TRADERS

WILLIAM BENT (Messner, $2.95) by Shannon Garst is a biography of William Bent, Indian trader, builder and operator of famous Bent's Fort, which was constructed near the present site of Ft. Lyon, Colorado.

Mrs. Garst has written a gallant story, in good taste, about one of the greatest benefactors of both Indians and whites in southern Great Plains frontier history. Bent tried to develop a prosperous Great Plains Indian community that would live in harmony with white traders and mountain men. He played a far bigger role in Indian-white inter-racial politics than either Kit Carson or Jim Bridger. But Bent had a poor press—he was a diligent plugger, not a colorful scout and guide like Carson and Bridger and is not as well known.

Bent married an Indian chief's daughter and several children were born of this marriage. His life was one of strife and dramatic tragedy. His dream of a peaceful thrifty Indian community turned into a complete fiasco. His half-breed children despised him and deserted to the Indians. Some of them participated in raids on white settlers and immigrants.

This is an excellent contribution to western history.

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GHOSTS OF THE GLORY TRAIL

By Nell Murbarger, (Desert Press, Palm Desert, Calif., 1956 328 pp., including maps and 24 pp. photographs. $5.75 postpaid.)

Brought together here for the first time are the earthy flesh-and-blood sagas of 275 former boomcamps in the Great Basin region of the Old West a thrilling galaxy of true tales of the early-day mining stampedes, of cities sprung from the sagebrush, fortunes made and lost overnight, and of outlawry and "necktie justice" on the turbulent frontiers of Nevada and Utah.

During the ten years devoted to gathering the material and making the pictures for *Ghosts of the Glory Trail*, the author traveled thousands of miles by automobile, horseback, and afoot, visited hundreds of ghost mining towns in remote mountain and desert areas, camped alone among the ruins, talked with scores of old-timers, and spent many hours in patient researching of yellowed newspaper files and long-forgotten reports. Result of these combined efforts is this historical bonanza of those Never-to-Come-Again days when giants strode the land with man's greatest dream cradled in their hearts.

To readers of *True West*, Nell Murbarger needs no introduction—her factual stories of Southwestern American history having appeared in these pages since the first issue of the magazine in April, 1953.

The Jest That Backfired

(Continued from page 84)

Wall Gang, who had recently been released from the penitentiary in Columbus, New Mexico. The man shot down between the cars had been a fellow convict of Kilpatrick, who at various times, had used the names Ed Welch, H. O. Beck, and Ole Hobeck.

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Down in a nearby side canyon, two saddled horses were found by the sheriff's men. They had been used to make a plain trail down to the Rio Grande, and then gunny sacks had been tied around their feet.

Obviously the bandit's remarks to Truesdale about carrying the loot to the river had been made to mislead the sheriff or the Rangers later. There is no doubt that the remarks were also intended as a cruel jest to give Truesdale a few anxious moments in repayment for the opposition he had shown when Kilpatrick first entered the express car.

Dave Truesdale was subsequently transferred to another railroad to protect him from any possible reprisals from friends of Kilpatrick. Dave waited until almost 1930 before he collected the standing rewards offered by the railroad and by the Federal Government, to which he was entitled in the circumstances. He retired on a pension about 1940 and returned to his old home in Tennessee, where he died about eight years later. But the memory of his courage still lives on in Texas.

Buffalo Bill as I Knew Him

(Continued from page 25)

Colonel Cody talked of many things that had happened in his long, adventurous life.

Among other things, he mentioned the Slim Buttes fight, the death of Tall Bull, and his own supposed duel with Yellow Hand. He stated definitely that he did *not* kill Tall Bull, (Ed Note: Tall Bull was killed by Major Frank North, at Summit Springs, in July of 1869), and that he did *not* kill Yellow Hand. He said earnestly that he had never knowingly killed *any* Indian.

I asked his opinion of my two friends, Captain Jack and Bob Strahorn, and he replied that they were both good scouts and did good service as such. I then asked him about the murder of American Horse by the soldiers at Slim Buttes. The Colonel would not discuss it; he just shook his head and said it was too bad to talk about.

Colonel Cody autographed a late photo of himself and asked that it be placed beside a picture of his Indian friends. There it hangs today.

In the afternoon of that memorable day at The Wigwam, Colonel Cody assembled the chiefs and sub-chiefs with his show to hold a ceremony for making a real Sioux Chief of the writer. Iron Tail made the impressive ceremonial speeches. I reciprocated by presenting the chief with a new repeating rifle as a tribute and token of my ever-lasting friendship. Mrs. McCreight was also dedicated as a good squaw, and feathers placed on her head. Cody and the editor of the local newspaper, the *Journal*, were the only white witnesses.

COLONEL CODY stood about six feet tall. His was a kindly countenance, and he always had a kindly word for everyone. His hair was beginning to turn gray, and hung half-way to his waist. He wore a heavy moustache, carefully trimmed, and a bushy goatee. In his white wide-brim sombrero, mounted erectly on his big white horse with flowing mane and tail he made a thrilling picture that was famous all over the world. He had taken his Wild West to Europe and exhibited in London, Paris,

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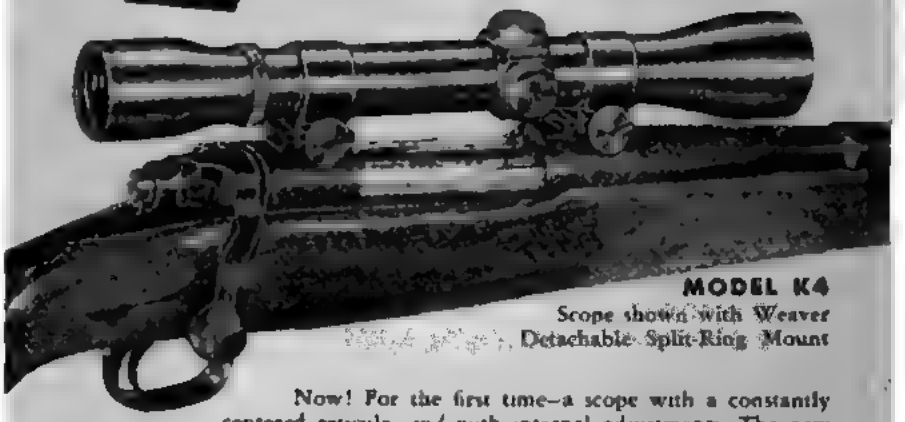

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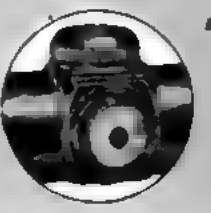

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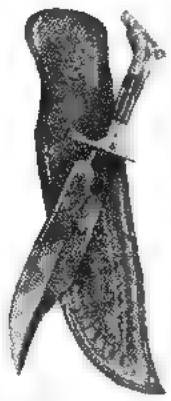

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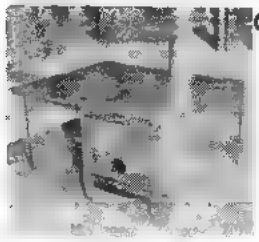

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THE TEXAN GUNSHOP Ingram, Tex.

Amsterdam, Rome, and Venice. In London, Queen Victoria asked for a special performance for herself and guests. The Sioux Chief, Red Shirt, put on a spirited war dance. The Queen applauded, and presented Red Shirt with a royal tribute. (A copy of Red Shirt's portrait, in his full regalia, hangs in The Wigwam today).

Harking back to his dinner conversation with Monroe McCanles, Cody remarked that he would include the story of Dave McCanles' killing in his projected autobiography. Unfortunately, this book was never published. Years later, the Nebraska Historical Society published a volume containing all details of that unsavory episode—verifying the facts related by Monroe McCanles to Colonel Cody. So, finally, the false tales of the outlaw Hickok's bravery were exploded by truth.

There, on that fondly remembered occasion nearly a half-century ago, Colonel Cody reiterated what he had told me before: that "Chief Iron Tail is the finest man I know, bar none!" He recalled with pleasure one time when he and Iron Tail went elk-hunting in the Rockies for a week, depending on the game they killed to supply them with food.

Seven years later, in 1915, the writer gave a reception for Iron Tail and Flying Hawk at The Wigwam, where over a hundred guests gathered to meet them. The two chiefs were close friends and sometimes traveled with the same show in this case, the 101 Ranch Show of Miller Brothers. When either or both came within a hundred miles of Dubois, they took a few days off and came to visit at The Wigwam. They considered it their home in the East, and knew they were always welcome.

In 1915, Iron Tail was with Colonel Cody's Wild West, showing in Philadelphia, when he took sick with pneumonia and was placed in St. Luke's Hospital. I sent a wire to Cody to send or bring the chief to The Wigwam for recovery as soon as he was able to travel. The message was not delivered, as Cody had already left for Baltimore. The sick chief asked to be sent home. He was placed on a sleeper and was found dead in his berth at Fort Wayne next morning. His sudden death was a great shock to Colonel Cody. He never knew until months later of my wire.

I next saw the Colonel in the main dining room of the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel in Philadelphia at the close of his 1915 season. Cody was having breakfast with his wife. I saluted them and sat down for a chat.

The famous scout had aged greatly since our last meeting. His hair was a mass of straggling, wispy white and his face was deeply wrinkled. One not knowing him of old, would hardly have believed that this was the real Buffalo Bill.

We talked about Iron Tail's death, and Cody almost wept in his grief. He keenly regretted not receiving my wire, believing as I did that the ailing chief might have recovered among friends at The Wigwam. Tactfully I changed the subject, inquiring as to the Colonel's future plans. He said that he would go out again for the 1916 season, and hoped to see us at The Wigwam on that round-up.

But the old Colonel was about at the end of the long trail. He went out as promised at the start of the 1916 campaign, and I saw him at the end of the last performance. Going to his tent at the rear of the showgrounds, I found him lying on his blankets, with his snowy head resting on his saddle. He was asleep, but roused at once at my greeting. He arose, shook hands, and immediately spoke of Iron Tail. With deep emotion, he said he was going to put a granite stone on the chief's grave, with a replica of the buffalo nickel (for which Iron Tail had posed) carved on it as a memento. Cody's voice trembled as he again expressed his great regret at not receiving my telegram that might have saved Iron Tail's life.

I was shocked and saddened to observe how feeble he was. I helped him to his feet, guided him to his private car and saw him to his berth. I shook hands with him for the last time. Not long after, Buffalo Bill went to his last long sleep.

ABOUT THE COVER

Dear Joe:

This painting is a technical study in Indian lore. I call it *The Medicine-dog Girl*, or—in white man's language—simply *The Horse-Woman*. The girl is a Dakota

You will note that the female riding gear is unusual; it has a modern look. The saddle differs in many ways from the regular Indian makes. I discovered the difference while in the never-ending process of building a reference library, by comparing pictures, assuming, guessing, and reading from old books. The type of saddle that I present is similar to those used off the "coast of Nebraska" until about 1840 by Sioux and others, but which I claim was not necessarily made by Indians.

Perhaps I have not observed anything new in squaw saddles, and quite possibly the item is insignificant to the general public. However, to a magazine like *True West* such details are both significant and important. There is not much material on the subject and one seldom sees squaw saddles in illustrations, common as they once were.

Prior to the 1840's, fur trappers of the Northwest evidentally placed great value on Indian women as their squaws. Catlin (1830's) quoted trades being made frequently between white trappers and Indian fathers for daughters in marriage. He further states that an important item in the deal was a saddle—with all the trimmings.

Many of Alfred Jacob Miller's (1837) paintings show the squaw saddle, but only enough detail to ascertain that a white man's Indian saddle existed.

The difference in construction that I

"You take the bay. I'll take the sorrell"

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observed is principally in the pommel and cantle; it is at least eight inches higher than any model I have seen. Certainly it is not substantial, least of all practical. . .

The rest of the paraphernalia was seemingly constructed approximately as the Indians would have made it themselves, with the exception of the seat which was covered with leather. The fancy skirt-to-crupper covering of cloth or leather apparently came in various sizes. Bridles were evidentally optional as well as the little useless ear flaps that showed off colored ornaments or bells. I do not know if the fancy "possible" sack (a sort of woman's pocketbook) came with the gift, although they seemed to be standard equipment.

I concluded that extreme designs were in demand as "persuaders." Apparently when an ardent trapper was not too successful courting an Indian maiden, he ordered one of these saddles as a convincer. His instructions must have been to whip up a job that would "knock 'em dead" yet still fit a horse. Other evidence of the white man is shown in the metal trimmings, beadwork, bells, and metal stirrups. These items were available to the red men at trading posts or from individual trappers.

I hope TW readers will be as interested in this rather lengthy explanation as I was in digging up the information. —B. J. McCausey.

Truly Western

(Continued from page 3)

Kid *aficionados*, and just plain readers from all over the country.

Looking back on my own experience, I'll bet that many of these letters are laudatory and many others bitterly, angrily denunciatory. Yet, out of all the heat and praise and anger will emerge a few gleams of truth not hitherto generally known—and, after all, that is precisely what you were looking for when you published the article.

In that connection, I will do my bit toward clarifying the ever intriguing mystery of Billy the Kid.

As any thoughtful, unbiased person knows, no man is all bad; just as no person is all good. The Kid was the same; neither all black nor all white. Certainly he was a killer, although not as great a killer as some of his so-called biographers brand him. That he ran off a few horses and cattle at times is generally admitted. It is also fairly common knowledge that he was gay and generous and brave. He was also passionately loyal to his friends, and from that simple fact stemmed much of his trouble.

How do I know all this? From my mother, Carmel Garcia, who knew the Kid in Fort Sumner, and danced with him at a little party a few evenings before Pat Garrett killed him in Pete Maxwell's house. She was only sixteen at the time, and you may say that a romantic young girl would be inaccurate in her evaluation of a presentable young man. Perhaps so, perhaps not. In any event, she remembered Billy vividly till the day of her death a few years ago and that was her opinion of him.—Roberto Martinez, P.O. General Delivery, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Dear Fred:

You asked us readers to vote on Billy the Kid. Now old Norm has done went and said he could only find one living

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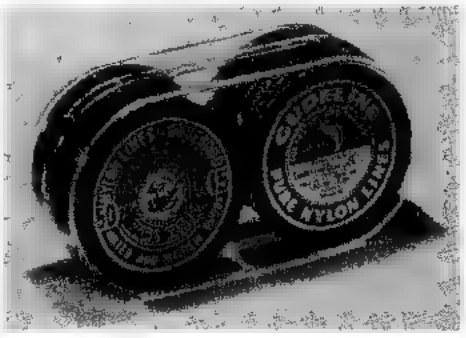

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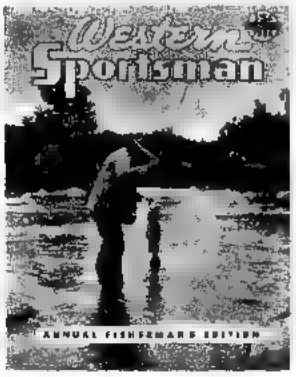

I told you we'd been eating loco weed!

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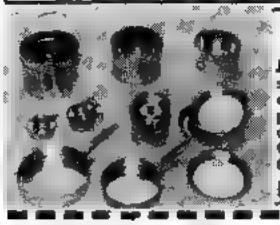

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soul that knew Billy, but in all probability you will get letters from a dozen of his old buddies now after the article is printed. If new stuff crops up, I feel that everybody would like to see it—but under present circumstances additional versions can only lead to confusion, since material will be taken from what someone else has written.

Now what I would like to see is more stuff from Shatka Bear-Step and others like him. Give us the tribal customs and superstitions; detailed drawings of Indian costumes worn on different occassions, etc. You fellows are recording history, so get this type of stuff before men like Bear-Step are gone. "Pony Tracks" Dick Spencer slipped when he let this one get away from *Western Horseman*, but since you printed it I am happy with no kicks.—Gene Holder, *Texas Horseman* Magazine, McGregor, Texas.

Dear Mr. Wiltsey:

That was a splendid article on Billy the Kid in the April issue. I can see that you have done some good research, and in addition to good material—the article was well written.

I do take exception to one thing, however; the part concerning Billy's leg irons . . . One of my acquaintances was George Titsworth, of Capitan, New Mexico. Capitan is ten miles northwest of Lincoln. Titsworth (now deceased) claimed to have the original leg irons of Billy. I have seen them many times. Because they were *not* filed or cut in two, I doubted that they were genuine. I questioned Mr. Titsworth, and he also said that at first he doubted their authenticity. Later he became convinced that they were the real article.

Billy spent the first night after his escape with Jesus Jose Padilla. Padilla had a young son. In 1935, after several books made Billy a legend, Padilla's son —then a man past 50—told Mr. Titsworth that he and his father took the irons from the Kid. Until that time he had been scared to mention it. He said the Kid came riding in on a horse with both legs on one side of the saddle. (That accounts for the reason the horse threw him at Lincoln). Mr. Titsworth went with the Mexican man down into a dugout, and dug into hard ground for several feet before finding the irons that had been there 50 years or more. They were in a fair state of preservation, with some oxidation.

Walter Noble Burns did a good job in his book *(The Saga of Billy the Kid)* but did not know about Padilla's son, of course

Well, you asked for comment on "Killer Kid," so here 'tis. To me it's a lot of fun checking things out.—Mel C. Kruse, P. O. Box 1066, Amarillo, Texas.

Dear Mr. Wiltsey:

Your April issue of *True West* arrived at our local newsstand, and I immediately bought a few copies. However, I was greatly disappointed with your story of Billy the Kid. . . . Since you asked that we all write to you and give our opinions, I won't sleep until I add at least a few paragraphs of Plain HELL.

Billy the Kid will always be a controversial figure, if we are going to rehash the story of Ash Upson entitled *The Authentic Life of Billy the Kid*. Walter Noble Burns follows closely with his *Saga of Billy the Kid*. Mr. Maurice Fulten's work at Roswell, which was finally assembled by Frazier Hunt in *The Tragic Days of Billy the Kid*, is so far the only thing halfway worth mentioning, except for the book written by Mr. Miguel Otero.

Now for more definite documentation: Mrs. Catherine McCarty married William H. Antrim March 1st, 1873, at the Presbyterian Church in Santa Fe. I'm sure the pastor will be good enough to show you the book of marriages showing the record. You may also go to the Santa Fe courthouse and see the same record on page 35A, showing the Reverend D. McFarland as the pastor who married the couple. Josie, Joe, and Henry McCarty were all present at the marriage.

November 23, 1859, as I recollect without going into my files, is the birthday of Ashmun Upson. Quite convenient, I would say. No record in New York shows William Bonney born November 23, 1859. The man Upson refers to as a boy killer is Billy the Kid from Colorado, who killed a man for insulting his mother. Mr. Moulton published an account to the effect that Billy never killed anyone in Silver City. H. H. Whitehall, the Sheriff of Grant County, whose records are on file at the Secretary of State's office in Santa Fe as when he served there as Sheriff, also published an account of the reason Billy left Silver City.

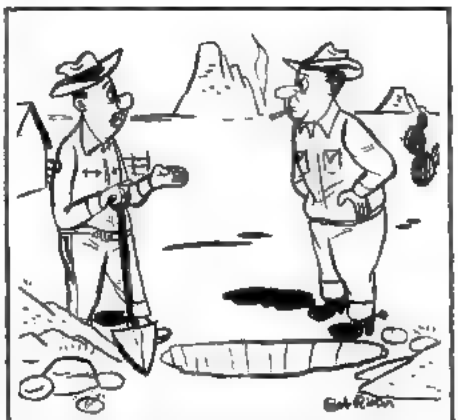
The true part of Billy's activities prior to the Lincoln County War are right near your own backyard.

Billy the Kid was a victim of circumstances. Tom Catren, Murphy, Dolan, Fritz, Rynerson, Riley, Dudley, Brady, Mathews, Pepin, Newcomb, Governor Axtell and the Santa Fe newspapers played this lad up to be the hell-cat he was made out to be. In short, it was The Santa Fe Ring. Publicity about the Kid spread like a prairie fire, but its root was in the articles that appeared in the Santa Fe papers. There is much proof that Billy was leaving the country when Garrett and his posse, through information of Barney Mason, made the capture.

I have done years of research on the Lincoln County War and, in my opinion, it is a terrible shame to rehash the same old stuff time after time without giving a full clear picture of what *did* take place.

More notes: The correct spelling of the name of Bob Olinger is with one L. You might examine his billfold with the bloodstains still on it next time you get to Lincoln County. In it is his name written many times, and addresses of those he corresponded with. His mother was Mrs. Stafford, who lived at Seven Rivers.

Taking a crack at the illustrations for the article: Tell Randy Steffen he should have put an old-time Western kak on that horse with the high cantle saddle. The horse is too stocky for those early days.



". . . gold, uranium and silver . . . but not a damned drop of water yet!"

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On guns: The Kid carried a .41 Colt Double Action. That picture Rose has (Rose Collection, Frontier Pix) of Billy's pistol with the front sight off is NOT the REAL thing. The pistol that was on his body when he was killed should be somewhere around El Paso. Possibly lost by now. Jim East gave his gun to an Army man, and later William S. Hart got hold of it. The Army captain sold it to Hart as the gun the Kid had on him at the Stinking Springs arrest or surrender. True, this gun *was* at Stinking Springs. It is now the property of Harold's Club in Reno. This is an example of how stories get mixed.

There is much I know about the Kid and his background, and if his people do not come forth after reading your article, I may publish my research throughout the years. However, I believe another historian will beat me to that satisfaction, for he has also been informed by the same people.

Old man Antrim thought a great deal of Billy and Joe, and I'm sorry to hear you say the same about him as the rest of them.

I am engaged now in assembling material for a true motion picture on the Kid, but am saddened by the fact that the producer is changing the scenario to suit himself. It is extremely disheartening to have the true facts distorted and changed in this manner.

If you think it will help you, I may send you a letter from Ash Upson to his sister wherein he states that he wrote every word of the Billy the Kid book *(The Authentic Life of Billy the Kid,* by Pat Garrett).

Well, sir, I put in my two cents. Time you hear from Phil Rasch, Mullen, and Kelleher, you should have ample HELL for writing that horrible story on our favorite subject, Henry McCarty.—Allen A. Erwin, 6655 Emmet Terrace, Hollywood 28, California.

Dear Mr. Gipson

I have read Norman B. Wiltsey's article, "Killer Kid," in your current issue and find myself in a state of complete confusion. This is "research"? This is a "bold plunge to obtain the truth"? If so, I owe the students in my classes in research an apology. I have been telling them that the first steps in research are to read what has been written on a subject (such as Volumes VII, VIII and IX of the *New Mexico Folk Lore Record* and the latest issues of the Los Angeles and Denver *Brand Books),* to review research materials that have been compiled by previous students (such as the files at the Old Lincoln County Historical Commission) and the basic source materials themselves (such as are available at the Library of the Museum of New Mexico and at the Library of the University of New Mexico).

I can't make out from the article just what Mr. Wiltsey did in Lincoln, but let us assume that he had gone to Mr. John Boylan, Curator of the Old Lincoln Historical Commission, and asked to see their research files. Let us see how the material therein would have compared with what he wrote.

Mr. Wiltsey starts out by relating the story of a blacksmith insulting Kate Antrim. At Lincoln he would have found a copy of an article from the Silver City *Mining Life* for September 19, 1874, reading in part: "Died in Silver City, on Wednesday the 16th inst., Catherine, wife of William Antrim—for the last four months she has been confined to her bed."

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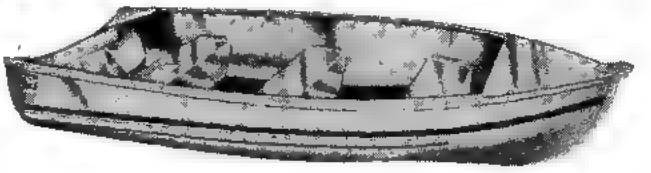

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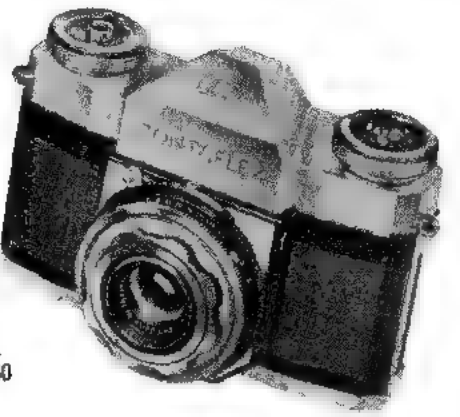

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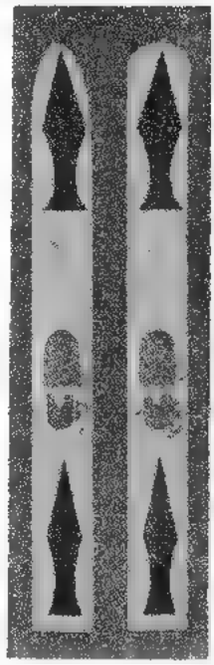

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He tells about a fight in which Andy (sic) Moulton was engaged and in which the Kid knifed the blacksmith. At Lincoln, Mr. Wiltsey could have seen a copy of a statement by Ed Moulton (original at Santa Fe) that no such fight ever occurred. He would also have found statements by several Silver City residents who knew the Kid personally to this same effect. He would also have found a notation to the effect that no such affair was reported in the Silver City papers of the time.

He tells us that the Kid was born in New York City on November 23, 1859. No one else has ever been able to document this. What is the basis for his statement? At Lincoln he would have found copies of articles from early New Mexican papers which specifically state that this was an error.

He tells us that the Kid's family, including his brother Edward, went to Coffeyville, Kansas, in 1862. At Lincoln, Mr. Wiltsey would have found statements from old-timers at Silver City and copies from articles appearing in New Mexico and Colorado papers of the 1880's, all of whom state that the Kid's brother was named Joseph. He would also have found a statement from the City Clerk at Coffeyville to the effect that the town was not in existence in 1862.

He tells us that Mrs. Bonney went to Denver, Colorado, where she married a Jack (sic) Antrim. The Jack Antrim is strictly his own version. The man's name was William Henry Harrison Antrim. At Lincoln, Mr. Wiltsey would have found certified copies of civil and religious marriage forms certifying that Antrim married a Mrs. Catherine McCarty at the Presbyterian Church in Santa Fe on March 1, 1873. Mrs. McCarty told Antrim that her first husband had died in New York City. The fact that there was never a Mrs. Bonney in Antrim's life is also recorded in these files.

He tells us that Antrim was a wanderer and a gambler. He was a miner. Until moving to California to live with his nephews and a niece, almost his entire adult life was spent in the Silver City-Mogollon-Georgetown area of New Mexico. There are scores of people there now who knew him for decades.

He tells us that the Antrims lived in Santa Fe for three years. They were married on March 1, 1873. Mrs. Antrim died September 16, 1874. At Lincoln, Mr. Wiltsey could have seen a copy of an article which appeared in the *Grant County Herald* for September 26, 1875. It reads in part: "Henry McCarty, who was arrested on Thursday and committed to jail . . . upon the charge of stealing clothes . . . escaped from prison yesterday through the chimney. . ."

He tells us that nothing can be confirmed about the Kid's life during the next few years. At Lincoln, he could have seen the copy of an article from the August 25, 1877, issue of the Tucson *Arizona Citizen*, giving the findings of the coroner's jury in the case of the murder of F. P. Cahill by Henry Antrim, alias Kid. He could have seen a copy of an article in the Mesilla *Independent* of October 13, 1877, stating that Henry Antrim had been recognized as one of the horse thieves who had recently run off several head of stock. He could have seen other materials relating to this period of the Kid's life, if he had bothered to look for them.

There is probably little point to continuing in this vein. I think I have said sufficient to demonstrate the appallingly obvious fact that actually Mr. Wiltsey has done nothing that could be called research even by charity.

Under separate cover I shall send you a reprint of an article on the battle at Lincoln which appeared in the last Denver *Brand Book* and which is based primarily on the weekly reports rendered by Lt. Col. N. A. M. Dudley and the sworn testimony at his Court of Inquiry. Mr. Wiltsey might be interested in the fact that it is entirely different than his version.

I once suggested to you that you could not afford not to belong to the Denver and Los Angeles posses of *The Westerners*. If you had taken my suggestion, you would have been familiar with some of the research that has been done on the Kid's early life. In that case I do not believe that you could conscientiously have approved Mr. Wiltsey's article.—P. J. Rasch, 567 Erskine Drive, Pacific Palisades, California.

Dear Mr. Wiltsey:

I truly enjoyed your article, "Killer Kid," very much. Since no one will ever know the complete truth about Billy the Kid, you wrote a wonderful article on what is known. I have many books and pamphlets on Billy the Kid and have done research on his life for a term paper I am in the process of writing. I am, therefore, quite familiar with the problems you must have faced in writing your article.

I have always enjoyed reading about Billy the Kid and wondered when *True West* was going to have an article on him. Now I am satisfied. You did a fine job!—I. Harshbarger, Anderson College and Theological Seminary, Anderson, Indiana.

Dear Mr. Wiltsey:

I have long waited for and recently read your article entitled "Killer Kid" in the *True West* magazine. First off I would like to state that I enjoyed the article, but was surprised to find you followed the old standby legend started by Garrett's book back in 1882.

The Kid's killing of a man in Silver City at age of 12 is but one example created by Garrett's book, this "damn lie" so to speak never would have got its start had it not been for the Garrett book; all serious students today discount it all together.

I am happy to relate that you did not follow the false legend of 21 killings one for each year of his life, but you made a mistake when you mentioned the Coe boys as brothers; other writers have made this error, but in truth a check on Geo. Coe's book, *Frontier Fighter*, page 18 refers to Geo. and Frank as *cousins*. I cannot understand why you left out the "Carlyle" killing so often credited to Kid. This killing blamed on the Kid, more than any other incited public sentiment against Billy and it is easy to understand why; it was logical to accept the posse's word for it. But all previous writers until very recently had failed to supply the Kid's version of this killing as the Kid expressed in a letter to Gov. Wallace, and was reprinted by the late "Col. M. G. Fulton" in *New Mexico Folklore* 1949-50.

I would here like to state if I may, that I have followed the Kid's legend for some eight years. I have read or partly read *over 500* items dealing with Kid: books, articles, movies, etc. I feel therefore that I am in a position to be granted an expression of opinion as to what printed material offers the most logical and truthful story on Kid to date

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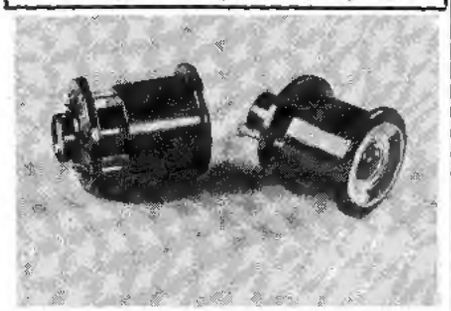

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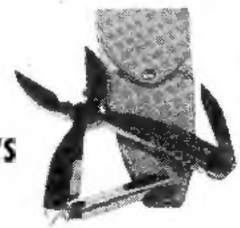

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(1957). Perhaps it will come as a surprise to many readers, but I sincerely believe, by far the best documented work on Kid is supplied in the book entitled *Alias Billy the Kid* by Sonnichsen and Morrison, University of New Mexico Press, 1955. This book deals mainly with an old man, Bill Roberts, who claimed he was Billy the Kid. This may sound like nonsense but the old gentleman's story is backed up by documented research supplied by researcher Bill Morrison. Much of the old man's statements were previously unknown by all other writers but later proven by the records dug out by Morrison. Moreover, the old gentleman's physical characteristics were such as would be expected of him if he were the Kid. The only manner in which the Kid could have slipped off his handcuffs would have been for him to possess large wrists but small hands—and odd physical characteristic to say the least. Still, the old man who claimed he was the Kid had large wrists but small hands and could wiggle out of a pair of cuffs.

When Kid and his men killed Brady, the sheriff, Kid himself was wounded in the side by a gunshot, it *must* have left a scar. The old gentleman in question had just such a scar in the right place; he also had many other scars brought about by gunshots which indicate that he must have lived a life of violence such as did Kid. He made statements which are now believed by serious students. Such as not killing a man at Silver City at the age of 12. He stated that no proof will ever be found to back up the belief that Kid was born in New York City, and he was right even though attempts have been made to prove it, he also said no proof can ever be found to prove Kid was killed; researcher Morrison dug up facts which prove there is nothing in black and white to prove the death of Kid. Strange that the most notorious outlaw of the Southwest is supposed to be killed and no one takes the precaution to substantiate the proof of same, unless they couldn't do so because it was not true. These are just a few of the facts presented in this fine book, which deserves much credit.

I, to, ask the question, if the old man was not Kid who in the hell was he? *Please, take notice.* Sincerely, Rick Steinke, 315 Aberdeen Ave., Winnepeg 4, Manitoba, Canada.

Dear Editor:

The article on Billy the Kid in your April, 1957, issue, by Norman B. Wiltsey, dredged up memories of long ago. My father, the late R. M. Turner, went to Silver City, New Mexico, in 1900 to practice law and stayed until 1907.

While there he served as District Attorney of Grant, Serrier and Socorra Counties and served one term in the Territorial Legislature. One of his close friends was Mr. Tom Lyons of the L. C. Cattle Company, located about 25 miles from Silver City.

When I was between the ages of 4 and 11, I remember Mr. Lyons telling a story of a boy about 12 walking to his ranch and telling that he had killed a man in Silver City for insulting his mother and beating him with a wet rope.

Mr. Lyons fed the boy and gave him a gun and his best horse and sent him on his way to Arizona. Afterwards he found out that the boy's story was true, that his name was William Bonney, soon to be known as Billy the Kid.

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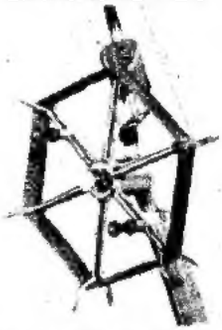

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Mr. Lyons very well. He was a great storyteller, but my father always believed this particular story to be true. Hoping that I have been of some help. I remain. —Russell M. Turner, Box 603, Winston, Arizona.

Editor, TRUE WEST:

The April issue of *True West* is my second, and it is one of the best magazines I have ever read. For example, I have been a reader of Billy the Kid stories for twenty-five years and "Killer Kid," by Norman B. Wiltsey, is about as near the truth as will ever be known.

Among others, I have read Pat Garrett's book, *The Authentic Life of Billy the Kid*, and Walter Noble Burns' *Saga of Billy the Kid*. Pat Garrett knew the Kid long before he hunted him down and killed him, and Burns spent years in research before publishing his book. Mr. Burns had the advantage of knowing men who had been friends with the Kid. It is very funny that these men never mentioned anything about the Kid's name being McCarty.

In your March issue a painting of Billy the Kid was shown, and in the April issue his actual photograph was shown. If Billy was really left-handed, he sure wore his gun in an awkward position!

Maybe the story by Mr. Wiltsey will put an end to this McCarty business. It is a fact that for history that took place many years ago, we have to depend on books ! . . . I suggest that these folks who think Billy the Kid Bonney was actually Henry McCarty read the book by Pat Garrett, the man that killed the Kid.—William W. Overly, 1018 Bluff, Fulton, Mo.

Dear Norm:

Was Billy the Kid right or left-handed?

Well, his clear picture shows buttons on his vest to be on the right side. This would mean that he was right-handed, since buttons always are on the right side of a vest.

I am a little embarrassed after having painted the Kid's portrait t'other way around. However, I think the buttons settle the argument and I thought I'd pass it on to you for what it is worth. I have to admit my wife made the above observation. Leave it to the ladies! They do the sewing.—Lea McCarty, 305 Jean Drive, Santa Rosa, California.

Dear Joe:

Just received your April issue of *True West* and I think Norm Wiltsey's piece on Billy the Kid is tops; in fact, unless any new evidence is uncovered, it ought to be the last word. May I say, too, that Randy Steffen's drawings are superb, they fairly breathe with the "feel" and atmosphere of the Old West.

Now in regard to your query for votes on running pieces on familiar characters: I think *True West* serves a real purpose in setting the record straight, where legend and misinformation have covered up the facts.

However—and this point I want to make—it is one thing for a competent researcher like Norm Wiltsey to write a solidly researched article, and another thing for some reader to send in a piece giving his opinion or view.

I would say, therefore, that it matters much who does the writing as well as what he writes about. The reason I respect *True West* is because it seeks the truth and writes about Indians and whites with impartiality and regard for each as a human being.—Thomas W. Wright, 712 Sharp Building, 18 East 11th Street, Kansas City 6, Missouri.

Editor's Note: We would like to express our thanks and appreciation for the many fine letters received on "Killer Kid." Space limitations allowed us to publish only a few of scores received. In our editorial opinion the above group contributed most to our announced goal of getting authentic information on the Kid. The picture is still far from complete, but it is only from letters like these that a pattern may be formed that will eventually discover a true picture of Billy the Kid. If that goal is ever achieved, we will feel amply repaid for sticking our chin out on this highly controversial subject.

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